

THE APPROPRIATENESS OF VIDEO MATERIALS FOR TEACHING OF
ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Researching on the appropriateness of video materials for learners of EIL, has required in depth discussion of the role of the medium of video in the field of cross-cultural communication in an EIL context - the ASEAN countries generally and Malaysia specifically.

This has drawn into the picture two perspectives. The first is sociocultural; the consideration of the role of English as an International language in Malaysia and the other ASEAN countries, the recommendation of a suitable pedagogical model of speech for audio-visual materials in Malaysia, the components of cross-cultural communication that are essential for any language learner who aspires to communicate in English with persons who come from varying sociocultural backgrounds.

The second perspective is that of the role of video for the teaching of intercultural language teaching. What is it in the medium that enables it to play a pivotal role in delivering the message - aspects of cross-cultural communication?

These perspectives provide the background to the main research question at hand, which is, how appropriate in

sociocultural content and design are ELT video materials for language learners in Malaysia?

ELT video materials have been commercially produced since the mid-70's. The majority of these materials are based in Western sociocultural settings, portraying native speakers interacting with each other. Given the dominant role of English as an International language, linking countries communicatively that otherwise would have great difficulty doing so, yet there has been minimal change in the sociocultural nature of the materials.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate via critical analysis and questionnaires, the appropriateness of the sociocultural and design features of existing and potential ELT video materials for EIL language learners.

The information from the two sources will, it is hoped, provide useful recommendations for the future production of appropriate ELT video materials for EIL language learners in Malaysia specifically and the ASEAN countries generally.

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List of Acronyms / Abbreviations

UKM	-	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
ELT	-	English language teaching
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
EIL	-	English as an International language
RELC	-	Regional Language Centre
SEAMEO	-	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation
B.M.	-	Bahasa Malaysia
ME	-	Malaysian English
RP	-	Received Pronunciation
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
EFL	-	English as a Foreign Language
ENL	-	English as a Native Language
ILTS	-	Industrial Language Training Service
VCR	-	Video Cassette Recorder
CTW	-	Children's Television Workshop
ESOL	-	English for Speakers of Other Languages
IATEFL	-	International Association for the Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

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Introduction

This research is an attempt, albeit a modest one, at exemplifying the necessary and valuable symbiotic relationship that should exist between particular issues in the field of applied linguistics with their pedagogical practical applications.

In investigating the appropriateness of the sociocultural and design content of ELT video materials for language learners of English as an International language in the ASEAN countries, this thesis has firstly had to argue a case for the teaching of EIL in Malaysia and secondly the potential of the role of video in developing EIL.

Therefore in Chapter One, a case is built up for the necessity of teaching EIL in the ASEAN countries generally and Malaysia specifically. This is done through drawing a sociolinguistic profile of the role of English in the ASEAN region and in Malaysia, and of portraying its absolute importance as a means of cross-cultural communication among the different people in the region and the rest of the world - people who speak different languages and who come from differing sociocultural backgrounds. It is shown that in Malaysia, English is still used to a large extent in the private sector and as

a means of inter-ethnic communication, especially among the Chinese and the Indians.

Having established that mastery of spoken cross-cultural communication is valued in Malaysia and given that the main objective of this research is to investigate the appropriacy of existing ELT video materials which facilitate the acquisition of this skill, it is necessary to investigate in detail a number of sociolinguistic issues of crucial importance in the production of video materials in Malaysia.

Amongst others, one of the most important ones in this research is the issue of the pedagogical model of speech appropriate for the design of video/television English language teaching materials. This has been referred to and discussed in the Malaysian literature on policies regarding English use, but has yet to be officially formulated.

Having established in Chapter One, the importance of EIL as a means of communication in the ASEAN region, Chapter Two, addresses the complex issue of what exactly constitutes spoken cross-cultural communication in an EIL context? This chapter focuses on the basic principle of EIL - that of having to cope with interaction with persons

from varying sociocultural backgrounds. Therefore, one of the key issues in this chapter is the necessity of equipping the learners with not only proficiency in the basics of the language - the structure, lexis and phonology but also equipping them with essential language awareness skills that will assist in the development in learners of the qualities of adaptability, which will facilitate communication with interactors who manifest different speech behaviours depending on the sociocultural background they come from.

This therefore requires learners of EIL to have a dual-language focus:

- i. to be able to use the language in the way the communicative movement has focused on - the appropriate use of language in various situations with persons of different role-relationships;
- ii. to be able to possess language awareness skills-culture-general modes of behaviour that will develop in learners qualities of adaptability to cope with the diversity in interaction.

With the focus on spoken cross-cultural communication with its verbal and non-verbal modes in either familiar or unfamiliar sociocultural backgrounds, the next chapter

deals with the role of video in developing cross-cultural communicative skills.

It is Chapter Three, that focuses on the particular and practical questions of what it is in the characteristics of video that enables it to contribute to the development of cross-cultural communication. It is shown that the symbolic codes of the presentational characteristics - the digital, analogic and symbolic codes of the medium provide video with the dual dynamic visual and aural channels which enable it to ideally portray both the visual and verbal features of spoken communication.

The research and experience of the use of television in other fields are drawn upon to argue a case for the valuable role of video in the field of cross-cultural communication.

It is argued that the dual-focus language needs of English as an International language are ideally facilitated through the medium of video. This is possible because the medium is not only able to present material which functions as role-models of behaviour, but also presents instances of miscommunication. In its function as role models of behaviour, it is able to present the appropriate use of language, taking into consideration the

sociolinguistic components that manifest themselves differently according to the role-relationships of the interactors and the situation in which the interaction takes place. In contrast, in portraying instances of miscommunication it serves a different function. Here, the materials portray sequences of problems in communication which are used to enable the learners' to analyse the reasons for the breakdown in communication. This, it is argued, encourages the development of culture-general modes of behaviour that facilitate cross-cultural communication.

Having argued for the advantages of the medium, which enable it to present and develop aspects of cross-cultural communication, it must be remembered that video, with all its advantages, is only as good as the materials that are used with it.

This therefore takes us onto the next phase of the thesis, Chapters Four to Seven, which investigate the appropriateness of the sociocultural and design features of ELT video materials for language learners in Malaysia. This is carried out in two ways. The first is through a critical analysis of the video materials used in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The second is through the use of questionnaires to assess learners' attitudes to the

various sociocultural features of video materials in the context of their perceptions of the role of English in the region.

Before the critical analysis of the video materials is carried out in Chapter Five, the sociocultural and design evaluative criteria that form the basis of the conduct of the critical analysis are initially formulated in Chapter Four. The criteria have been drawn up based on the theoretical discussions of Chapters One to Three, which are embedded in the cross-cultural context of English as an International language. Underlying the formulation of the criteria is the principle of primacy of educational principles in the production of video materials, coupled with the pedagogic requirement that the design features should encourage active viewing to increase the learnability factor in the students.

Unless the learners relate to the sociocultural features of the video materials, the materials can be more of an impediment than an assistance in learning a language. Therefore, some of the sociocultural criteria formulated revolve around the nature of the settings, interactors and interactions and the pedagogical model of speech.

The design criteria have been focused on because it is

through them that active viewing on the part of the learners can be assured. This is important because only when materials are viewed actively can learning be facilitated. Some of the design criteria focused on are the design format to be adopted, length of sequence, synchronisation of audio and visual channels and the pedagogical devices to be incorporated.

Using the criteria as a checklist, the ELT video materials that are used in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia are evaluated in Chapter Five. This is to assess them in terms of the criteria of the sociocultural and design features of video materials for language learners in an EIL context, who need the language to communicate cross-culturally.

Apart from the critical analysis, it is absolutely imperative for research of this nature to place the learner in a position of central importance, by investigating his / her attitudes towards the sociocultural features of the materials. It is this that the learner has to positively relate to, so that the learning process is facilitated through motivation.

This is investigated through questionnaires. The conduct of this aspect of the research is discussed in Chapter

Six. The main variables investigated in the questionnaires are: attitudes to English language teaching video materials set in British, Malaysian and multi-sociocultural contexts, the learners' attitudes to suggested models of speakers, attitudes to the role of English, attitudes to potential interactors in work and social situations. In addition, learners are also provided with the opportunity to allocate out of a 100%, the sociocultural settings for a potential ELT video package for UKM language learners.

Chapter Seven presents the results obtained from the questionnaires, and Chapter Eight provides a discussion of the results.

It is in Chapter Nine that the implications of the findings from the critical analysis and the questionnaires are drawn together to enable recommendations to be made for the potential production of video materials for language learners of EIL in Malaysia. In addition, the complexity of the research provides areas of future research which will be discussed. All of this will then lead on to the final conclusion.

Chapter One: The Sociolinguistic Profile of English in the ASEAN Region with a Specific Focus on Malaysia

I.1 Introduction

This research aims to study both the importance and appropriateness of the sociocultural content and pedagogic design features of existing ELT video materials for language learners in the ASEAN region generally with a specific focus on Malaysia. At the outset, it will be the sociocultural content that will be focused on as it ties in closely with the broad important issues of the role of English in the ASEAN region. The pedagogic design features will be discussed later in Chapters Four and Five, after the potential of the medium of video for the teaching-learning process has been argued for in Chapter Three. This is because of the inter-dependency between the attributes of the medium and the nature of the pedagogic design features of instructional materials.

The context of a research that concerns itself with the use of English from a sociocultural perspective should be based in a wider pragmatically-based description of language use in the ASEAN region with a specific focus on Malaysia. This will provide the relevant background

information which will have direct implications for the consideration and selection of the sociocultural content of ELT video materials appropriate for language learners in Malaysia. The sociocultural content will incorporate the sociocultural settings, characters, nature of interactions and the variety of English to be spoken in ELT video materials for language learners in the Malaysian situation. The background information for the decision-making process of the selection of the sociocultural content will be provided by investigating the following areas:

- i. the role and status of English in the ASEAN countries
- ii. the international currency of English
- iii. a sociolinguistic profile of the role of English in West Malaysia
- iv. a profile of the English-speaking community in Malaysia
- v. the existence of a standard Malaysian English speech community
- vi. recommendation of a pedagogical model of speech for the production of English language teaching video materials for the Malaysian situation.

It must be mentioned that even though the focus of the study is on the Malaysian situation, it has wider

implications for the ASEAN region. This carry-over of information can be applied because of the regional ties that exist which establish various aspects of commonalities over the countries in the ASEAN organisation. One of the many ways in which this is manifested is in the utilisation of English as an International language as a means of communication in the region.

1.2 The Role and Status of English in the ASEAN Countries

This section will provide a wider perspective to the role and status of English by contextualising it in the ASEAN region. This is to draw on the commonalities and differences in the role of English in the various countries which will have implications for this research which aims to study the appropriateness of the sociocultural content of existing ELT video materials and in addition, to recommend the sociocultural content for the production of future video materials for Malaysian English language learners.

ASEAN - the acronym for the Association of South East Asian Nations comprises Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Phillippines, Singapore and Thailand. Non-member countries which are usually included in regional matters

of mutual concern are Burma, Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam. This organisation was set up to promote greater regional co-operation among the member countries with regards areas that would mutually benefit them - e.g. economy and trade.

Stemming from the cooperative spirit of the ASEAN organisation, various specialized bodies were set up by the South East Asian Ministers' of Education Organisation (SEAMEO). The subjects catered for reflected the specialized educational needs of the region. They were Science, Maths, Technology and Language Teaching.

The centre for the training of teachers of English, which is based in Singapore, is presently known as the SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELC). In addition to courses for teachers, it also organises conferences each year which revolve around themes which are related to the language learning and teaching domain. These conferences are attended by an international array of participants, both native and non-native speakers of English. All these cooperative ventures point to the absolute necessity of a language as a means of communication for peoples who speak different languages.

The various member countries of Asean have all had varying colonial histories, with the exception of Thailand which

was not colonised at all. Malaysia and the Philippines have both been colonised by English-speaking countries (the British Empire in Malaysia's case and the United States in the case of the Philippines). In linguistic terms, this has been advantageous because,

"Malaysia and the Philippines have been very pragmatic where their treatment of the language of their colonial masters was concerned. They have all the time realized that the English language is an asset to keep, since it can provide them with an avenue to international relations as well as a means to their advancement in science and technology."

(Asmah: 1982, p.9)

Indonesia had Dutch as their foreign language in the days of Dutch foreign rule. Since independence, she has gravitated slowly but surely towards replacing Dutch by English which has greater international legacy. In Thailand, "English is no longer a matter of preference. It is a matter of necessity." (quoted in Sukwiat: 1985, p.64)

In contrast to the above English language policies, Singapore even though she has had a colonial history similar to many of the countries above, has adopted a

different route regarding language planning and language function. Singapore is the only country in the Southeast Region which has not only maintained the language of her past colonial master but has presently accorded English a high status and prominent functions. This is reflected both in the "roles of English in the country and in the high level of proficiency in English attained by Singaporeans ... (as well as) ... by the fact that, from 1986 onwards, all schools and universities in the country will have been converted to the English medium." (Noss: 1986, p.14)

In contrast, intranationally the other countries promote their own national languages for public, private and official purposes. The majority of the ASEAN countries "perceive their national languages as important symbols of national identity ..." (Noss: 1986, p.iii) English in these countries is not needed as an intranational language for interaction among the citizens of the countries, except for the Phillippines which uses either English or a mixture of English and Tagalog called Taglish and Singapore, which uses the language for most of its domains of communication.

But running in parallel, through the growing regional political, economic and educational dependency, there is

an important necessity for regional cooperation. It is through the English language that this can be facilitated. This will help the various countries to look outward in all spheres of existence - political, educational and economic. For example, presently, the various ASEAN countries are cooperating with each other in their attempts to attract tourists to the ASEAN region. Therefore, given all these varying and diverse activities which require interaction with various other countries on the international scene, the local populace need a language that they would be willing to acquire to facilitate communication. It is to this end that English is used in the region, both for intra-ASEAN and international communicative purposes.

I.3 The International Currency of English

It has been English which is the chosen language because of two reasons - the first historical and the second practical.

The historical reason stems from the spread of the British Empire. The colonial legacy left behind it a possession of utmost importance - the English language which the colonies have used and eventually possessed and made their own, for use in some cases intranationally but in all

cases most definitely internationally.

The second reason for the continuing stronghold of the English language has been the economic, technological and trade dominance of both the U.S. and England. This situation has evolved largely through the 19th Century dominance of the British Empire and the 20th Century technological and economic superiority of the United States. Presently, it is not only the former colonies of the British Empire (Asia, Africa, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand), but also other countries, which have adopted English for technological access and dissemination and international communication.

All this has led to English becoming an International language in the true sense of the word - enabling people who speak different languages all over the world, both native speakers and non-native speakers, to communicate with each other in friendship or hostility, in business or pleasure amidst a host of other activities.

The following statement reflects the extent of the spread of the language:

"... between 1600 and 1900, speakers of English pushed themselves into every part of the globe (more

recently, to lunatic deserts far beyond the globe), so that at this present time, English is more widely spread, and is the chief language of more countries than any other language is or ever has been." (Quirk: 1985, p.1)

In fact with the widespread use of English the world over, what seems to be emerging are a number of varieties of the English language. This phenomenon, though interesting and pertinent to the language arena, will not be dealt with at great length, as it is beyond the scope of this research to include extensively, the issue of the World Englishes.

Instead this research will concentrate on a description of the different varieties of Malaysian English as this will contextualise the issue of the pedagogical model of speech to be recommended for today's Malaysian language learners who need to communicate internationally. With the widespread use of English, should it be a native-speaker model or would the different varieties of Malaysian English be acceptable? This issue will be of importance for the production of ELT video materials for this region because the language variety to be used is a basic issue that would determine the nature of the speech model to be recommended for today's Malaysian English language learner and consequentially determine the characters that would be

involved in the production of the video materials.

Having drawn up a general picture of the role of English in the ASEAN countries and argued the existence and growing necessity of English as a means of communication for international purposes, it is timely to move onto the specific concerns of this research which is to delineate the implications of the above for Malaysia in the context of the sociolinguistic profile of West Malaysia. This will incorporate the historical development of the language in the various domains, a description of language use, the varieties of English spoken by the speech community and the existence of a standard English-speaking Malaysian speech community. All this sociolinguistic-based information will have an important bearing on the assessment and recommendation of the sociocultural content of ELT video materials - the settings, the appropriate pedagogical model of speech, the characters and the appropriate sociocultural behaviours.

1.4 The Historical Development of English in Malaysia

English has experienced four varying positions depending on the time period in its existence in Malaysia. The four periods are:

- i. the period prior to Independence
- ii. the first twelve years of the post-Independence period, 1957 - 1969
- iii. 1970 - the 1980's
- iv. the 1990's - the Future

The varying positions of the language are influenced by a number of factors. One of these is the existing language policy at a particular period in time, which in turn, affects the role of English in the education system. This directly influences the development of English as spoken by Malaysians, resulting in the development of a number of varieties of English.

Another factor of utmost importance is the fact that the population of Malaysia is made up of three dominant ethnic groups. The majority are the Malays followed by the Chinese and then the Indians. The differing ethnic backgrounds has generally resulted in the development of different attitudes towards the English language, which in turn has influenced the development and growth of English in Malaysia.

The development of the varying statuses and roles of English in these four periods will contextualise the evolution of the English-speaking community that exists in

Malaysia and the development of 'Malaysian English' and its sub-varieties.

1.4.1 Period Prior to Independence

The period prior to Independence was the period when the British dominated virtually every sphere of life in Malaysia. To provide the manpower necessary for the administrative requirements of the British Empire meant having to ensure that Malaysians knew English. This motive led to the setting up of English-medium schools in the urban areas. This resulted in the local populace in the urban areas enrolling themselves in the schools. These constituted mainly the Chinese and the Indians, with a lesser number of Malays - those who could afford to pay the fees imposed by the school systems. The majority of the Malays lived in the rural areas and had access to Malay-medium schools and not to the English-medium schools. This led to an imbalance among the multi-ethnic population as to the accessibility of English, which in those days definitely meant better educational, job and social prospects. The approach adopted by the British has been labelled the 'divide and rule' approach (Asmah: 1982, p.73), but it is not within the scope of this research to address the issue of the ethnic and economic imbalances that resulted as a consequence of this unequal access to

English-medium education.

The English-medium schools were initially staffed by the British who spoke Standard British English. As the number of schools expanded it became necessary to employ local teachers as well who spoke standard English but with slight variations in the phonology. The learners were provided with native-speaker or near native-speaker pedagogical models of speech. This coupled with the fact that English was widely used in the administrative and educational fields resulted in the learners developing a capability of using an educated near-native variety of English, used in the educational and formal environments.

At the same time, there emerged a parallel development. The urban Malay, Chinese and Indian learners who came from varying mother-tongue backgrounds found in English (a language regarded as neutral to the three ethnic groups and highly prestigious) a means of inter-ethnic communication for informal communication. Their usage of English in social and informal situations was influenced by their native languages and this gradually led to the birth of a variety of 'Malaysian English'. This development is described by Augustin who says,

"The need to communicate in a commonly shared

language gave rise to a complementary dialect of English in Malaysian schools for intergroup communication, characterised by features found in the home dialects of the pupils, especially those of the Malay, Chinese and Indian groups. It is important to realise that this dialect became the major lingua franca for the multiracial school population and eventually for Malaysian adults with an English educational background." (Augustin: 1982, p.254)

Thus learners in that period were able to possess mastery of not only Standard English which was used as the medium of instruction and in formal situations, but also, the Malaysian English variety which was used as the inter-ethnic means of communication in informal situations. This led to the establishment of an English-speaking community, made up of speakers from the three ethnic groups in varying proportions, albeit constituting a smaller proportion of the total Malaysian population.

Asmah sums up the above situation by asserting that,

"..... these English schools ... nurtured a group of Malaysians of various races who became 'more comfortable', as it were, in English than they were in any other language. In other words, in Malaysia

before Independence (1957) and for some years after Independence there was a small population, albeit significant in social and political stature, who could speak English better than the tongues of their ancestors." (Asmah: 1988, p.3)

I.4.ii First Twelve Years of Post-Independence Era

With Independence, came the natural resolve to unify the national system of education. This was implemented through various recommendations made in the Razak Report of 1956 (just prior to Independence in 1957). The recommendations were made to enable Malay to eventually emerge as the national language of the country. A national language was necessary to unify the cultural and national aspirations of Malaya. Initially, Malay was introduced as a compulsory subject in schools, alongside English which was still the medium of instruction. This meant that it was compulsory to pass both subjects in the school examinations.

In 1960, the Rahman Talib Report, emphasised the need for more emphasis on Malay as the medium of instruction. In these early stages of implementation, given the fact that Malay was and still is the native language of the Malay ethnic group, it was natural for the non-Malays to feel a

great deal of dissatisfaction with these language policies. There was a general feeling on their part that the language policies were "to accord favored status to the Malays, the largest and therefore potentially the most politically powerful ethnic group, in their economic competition with the descendants of the Chinese and Indian immigrants." (Lowenberg: 1986, p.74) The non-Malays also felt that the complete switch-over from the English medium to Malay-medium schools would lead to a gradual erosion of the country's educational standards, which fortunately have been unfounded fears.

On the other hand, the position of the Malays has to be understood. With Independence, the Malays inherited a system of government and education which was English-based. The Malays being the dominant group who experienced the fervour of nationalism more than the others naturally felt that to have a country they could call their own and to unify it, one needed a language which was not associated with the colonial masters and which in this case had to be the native language of the dominant ethnic group, that is, Malay.

Thus the period during which a relatively new language is taking over the status and roles of the more established colonial language is a difficult one that needs to be

handled with care. English had to be relegated to a lesser position because,

"A country that has been decolonized from a foreign power and is in the process of building itself up is likely to fall into the danger of a competition between the well-established colonial language and the developing national language in its education system. The transitional period in the gradual transfer of the education system from one whose medium was formerly a colonial language to one whose medium is the national language is most crucial. This is due to the fact that nostalgia for and confidence in the already established colonial language can neutralize loyalty to the national language." (Asmah: 1982, p.28)

The initial phases of implementation were not carried through with great tenacity. In fact, the government preferred to use persuasion rather than stricter measures to implement the various language policies. Unfortunately, this did not see the national language progressing in various spheres, which included the Malaysian administrative and educational machinery. In addition, the economic disparity that existed between the non-Malays, especially the Chinese and the Malays in the

business circles led to a great deal of unhappiness and frustration on the part of the Malays. This eventually led to the explosive ethnic riots in 1963. The post-riot result was that the political leaders realised that the issue of the implementation of Bahasa Malaysia had to be pursued with greater fervour. This led in 1967, to the National Language Act, which gradually implemented Malay as the medium of instruction in all schools that originally used the English, Chinese and Tamil medium of instruction.

Another change was that the national language was re-named Bahasa Malaysia. This was to provide the national language with a name which the entire population could identify with in its process of creating a Malaysian identity.

I.4.iii 1970 - 1980's

With the gradual phasing out of English, the various levels of education were eventually conducted in Malay. To give it a more national image and to encourage the non-Malay ethnic groups to identify with it, Malay was renamed Bahasa Malaysia. The gradual phases in the implementation of Bahasa Malaysia will be listed out below:

1970 - primary schools were converted to the Malay medium of instruction with English as a compulsory second language. The new Education Policy 1970 reaffirmed the status of English as "second most important language."

1982 - the secondary schools were completely in Malay medium, but English is still "a compulsory subject in schools and is offered in all public exams - although it is not compulsory for a student to pass in this subject."

(Cabinet Committee Report, 1979)

1985 - Malay was the sole medium of instruction in all educational institutions (with the exception of Chinese and Tamil-medium primary schools) including the tertiary level, with English retaining the status it has above.

In more recent times, after 30 years of Independence, matters have stabilised and a large majority of the non-Malays, those who have been educated in the English-medium of education, accept the fact that it is essential to have a good command of the national language to enable the future generation to have a fair opportunity at higher education and employment within the country. The younger

generation who have been educated in the Malay medium of education naturally identify more with the language as the symbol of national identity and have acquired a considerable flair for the language.

This has resulted in a wider base of Bahasa Malaysia speakers, comprising the various ethnic groups, who are naturally less proficient in English. At the same time paradoxically Malaysian English of the mesolect variety, which is not regarded as suitable for international communication, is still predominantly used as a means of communication among the various ethnic groups, especially the Chinese and the Indians.

As a result of the above situation, there are fears that standards of the English language will drop even further and the population who possess mastery of the English language for international interaction will diminish slowly but surely.

Asmah echoes the anxiety often felt by the policy-makers when she says,

"There has been a feeling among Malaysians, including the top leaders, that there has been a drop in the attainment level of proficiency in English among

Malaysians. This impression has proven to be a fact supported by performance in the schools, colleges and universities. It has now become an uphill task for students in the universities to refer to texts written in English, let alone discourse on their academic subjects in the language. In the public sector, there has been a general decry of the fact that the government officials of today are no longer efficient in handling tasks in English compared to their predecessors. Superficially, this should not be a major concern, given that administration in government offices is done in Bahasa Malaysia. However, in interaction with the outside world, even with her closest ASEAN brethren, English is still the language that Malaysia has to use." (Asmah: 1987, p.16)

As a result, policy-makers have begun refocusing on English as it is an essential means of international communication and it is necessary for sheer economic survival to have a proportion of the populace well-versed in English. An example of one of the measures taken is a committee recently set up to study the decline in the numbers studying English literature in the University of Malaya (this is the only department that offers a degree course in English literature) and to make recommendations

to arrest the decline. This committee recommended that,

"... the university establish a matriculation course for students who would eventually be taken into the English Dept. of the university The ultimate aim is to have a core of people whose fluency in English is high such that there will be model speakers of English in Malaysia." (Asmah: 1988, p.11)

It is clear from the above policy and implementation developments that the increased range in the roles and statuses of Bahasa Malaysia will naturally result in a decrease in the range of roles for English.

This is especially true in the implementation of the language in all domains related to the government - for example, the education system, the administrative service, the mass media and others. If one refers to the table on the summary of the functions of Bahasa Malaysia and English, it is clear that English still plays a predominant role in the private sector. This can be explained in two ways. One is that the private sector is not falling in line with the policies laid down by the government regarding the national language. On the other hand, it is not as if the private sector has no affinity to the government's language policies but that economic

and commercial considerations takeover the political considerations and are the deciding factor in determining the actual language to be used in the that sector. Given that economic and commercial considerations are of utmost importance and consequently the need to utilise a language that will facilitate communication at both intranational and especially international levels is paramount, it is not surprising that the private sector moans the fact that recent graduates are handicapped in their lack of proficiency in the English language.

1.4.iv The 1990's and the Future

The 1990's heralds a period of timely and lucid realisation regarding the value and necessity of the English language for Malaysians. This is summed up effectively by A. Kadir Jasin, Group Editor of The New Straits Times, a major newspaper in the country, who spoke at a recent seminar on the teaching of English as a second language (1990). He said, "We have benefited tremendously in terms of self-esteem and wisdom because we have a command of our national language and English, let us not deprive our children of the same benefit." Inherent in the statement is the realisation that in this modern age, where 80% of information technology is in English amongst other domains, any parochial attitude towards linguistic

attainment is detrimental to the progress of individuals and the nation.

At present, Malaysia is aspiring towards the process of industrialisation. Hand in hand with this process must unavoidably be a core of the population who are trained in the technological and industrial subjects. As is generally known, to attain specialisation in these areas, it is almost impossible to do it without a certain degree of proficiency in the English language. In addition, Malaysia is also playing a more predominant role in the field of international politics as well as tourism. These are all areas which need a communicative ability in English. Bahasa Malaysia has established itself as the national language - Malaysians cannot afford to be sentimental and insecure about the situation anymore but should take steps to ensure that standards of English are not lowered any further but are instead improved.

Unfortunately a continual conflict exists in Malaysia regarding language policies. This is reflected in the stance adopted by certain quarters of the population that Bahasa Malaysia should suffice to fulfill all of Malaysia's needs and it is not necessary for too much emphasis to be placed on the English language.

The traditionalists often claim that if a country were an economic power to reckon with, then it should be possible for that country to expect others to learn its language, often citing as an example, Japan. It must be remembered though that even in Japan's case as soon as its peoples leave its shores and aspire to trade with other nations, then it has to either resort to translators which may not be a totally efficient process or encourage its population to master English. In fact, in Japan, the majority of Japanese students eyeing an eventual position in multinational corporations or the civil service pick English as their necessary second language in universities and colleges. Given this, it makes an even stronger case for countries which are aspiring to greater growth and development to have a proportion of its population proficient in a language that will enable its peoples to communicate internationally especially for trade and economic reasons.

For the 90's, it must be accepted that for a country to progress, divergent extreme views regarding language policies and implementation can only function as retarding factors to growth and development. In fact, difficult as it may be for some quarters of the population, sentimentality should not interfere with the attitudes towards language. One should instead adopt a pragmatic

approach and attain a balanced outlook towards acquiring languages which can only benefit us and consequently the nation in the long run.

Presently, Malaysia has attained a level of language stability and maturity with Bahasa Malaysia securely established as the national language of the country. There is no doubt about the primacy of the national language, given that it is the medium of instruction in the educational system and the language of government officialdom. A mastery of this language holds the passport to job employment and opportunities, especially in the government service.

In addition, the fact that must be faced up to, no matter how difficult, is that no country, if it wants to progress, can afford not to have a certain percentage of its population proficient in English. It should not be necessary for the entire working population to have a similar mastery of the language. After all, not all school leavers will potentially be expected to negotiate at trade/commercial meetings. Instead, one should expect the higher-academic level achievers to have a mastery of the language - a mastery that will equip them with the skills to negotiate and to communicate successfully with peoples from varying cultural backgrounds from all over

the world.

Thus, it may be suggested at this stage that it may be beneficial for a country like Malaysia to work towards the threshold levels and survival skills as similarly worked out by the Council of Europe for its language learners. (Trim et.al.: 1980) This would help ensure that different levels of mastery are equated with different levels of the education system, culminating in a mastery of all components of the spoken language at the tertiary level. In Malaysia's case, it is for the Malaysian policy-makers to take cognizance of the importance of the mastery of the language at various levels and establish procedures and measures necessary to ensure it - measures which may appear drastic to some but which must be adopted if the government is serious in its efforts in improving standards of the English language.

The present Malaysian Minister of Education, Encik Anwar Ibrahim, is well aware of this need and has the necessary courage and foresight to encourage the use of English (1990). His actions are all the more commendable given that Malaysia is a multi-racial country and there are people who have strong views on language policies, especially traditionalists who hold fast to the fact that predominance should be attributed mainly to the national

language and no other language.

I.4.v Summary of the Functional Use of Bahasa Malaysia and English

It has been established that English, despite a variegated historical development which has reduced its status and officially minimised its role in the administrative, official and educational capacities is still a much sought-after commodity because of its international currency by most Malaysians both Malays and non-Malays. The following table has been drawn up to summarise the fluctuating roles that both Bahasa Malaysia (referred to as B.M.) and English have played in various domains over distinct periods of time, as a result of the official policies over the status and role of the two languages: the periods have been defined as the period prior to Independence: pre-B.M. switch, post-Independence period, post B.M. switch and the future.

It must be mentioned that this summary does not aim to discuss in detail the application of the languages in the different domains but instead aims to provide a general overview of the use of Bahasa Malaysia and English during the three main periods of past development.

Table I.1

The Functional Use of Bahasa Malaysia and English

	Pre-B.M. Switch		Post-B.M. Switch		The Future	
	B.M.	Eng.	B.M.	Eng.	B.M.	Eng.
Domains						
Education	-	*	*	+	*	+
Mass Media	-	*	*	+	*	+
Day-to-Day Living						
i. Urban areas	-	*	+	*	*	*
ii. Rural areas	*	+	*	-	*	-
Government (Public Sector)						
i. Higher rung	-	*	*	*	*	*
ii. Lower rung	-	*	*	+	*	-
Business Industry (Private Sector)	-	*	+	*	+	*
International Communication	-	*	-	*	-	*

Key

* : Strong usage

- : No usage

+ : Minimum level of usage

The role and development of English and Bahasa Malaysia in the education system has been discussed at length in the previous sections. Suffice it at this stage to say that presently English has been relegated to a lesser position. It is now a school subject that is compulsory to sit for in examinations but is not compulsory to pass. It used to possess a dominant position during the pre-B.M period when it was the medium of instruction in the educational system. Given this drastic change in the role of the language in the education system, it should not be particularly surprising that proficiency standards of the language have dropped gradually over a period of time.

The mass media, in terms of television networks have similarly replaced the use of English for broadcasting purposes to that of Bahasa Malaysia. The national television network faces problems in its attempts to provide Bahasa Malaysia entertainment television programmes. The production does not seem able to meet the existing demand. As a result, most of the entertainment programmes are still largely American, British and to a lesser extent Australian productions.

The Government must be commended for providing a number of radio networks which are broadcast solely in English, Chinese, Tamil or Bahasa Malaysia to cater for the

divergent needs of the multi-ethnic population of this country.

The use of both Bahasa Malaysia and English varies in the urban as compared to the rural areas in Malaysia.

The role of Bahasa Malaysia remains largely unchanged in the rural areas of Malaysia. Prior to independence, Bahasa Malaysia was predominantly used in the rural areas, given that the majority of the people who lived in the rural areas were Malays and to a lesser extent the Chinese and Indians. Similarly, in the present times it is still Bahasa Malaysia that is the predominant language used.

In direct contrast, the urban areas which were mostly made up of Chinese and Indians in the period prior to Independence saw a growing use of English. This, as discussed in Section I.4.i, was encouraged by the British who needed a proportion of the populace well-versed in the language to facilitate their administrative and economic needs.

After Independence was achieved, government efforts were channelled to ensuring equitable distribution of economic resources between the Malays and the non-Malays, and to ensuring that there developed in the population a Malay

middle-class in the urban areas, which had not been encouraged during the British rule.

With the national, educational and administrative focus on Bahasa Malaysia, there gradually emerged a population made up of both Malays and non-Malays that were proficient in the language. In terms of usage, in their daily existence, the Malays naturally used Bahasa Malaysia, given that it was their mother-tongue. In contrast, in the urban areas, most of the non-Malay population, especially the educated Indian population, tend to speak English to communicate with each other socially as well as a means of communication between members of the family. This can lead to an unfortunate situation that the mother-tongue of the minority population, e.g. the Punjabis, the Malayalees and others becomes less and less mastered and utilised. To ensure that this does not take place in the long-run would require the intervention of and assistance from the government but it is beyond the scope of this research to delve into this area.

The measure of direct contrast in the use of Bahasa Malaysia and English is in the domain of the Government Service, that is, the Public Sector as compared to the Business Industry, that is, the Private Sector. In the higher rungs of the government service, English still

holds an important position, though Bahasa Malaysia, being the national language is the language of administration. This is because it is necessary for government officials to interact not just intra-nationally but also internationally.

The lower-ranking government officials will not have to use much English in their daily transactions. A working command of the language should suffice, given that Bahasa Malaysia fully functions as the means of communication in the administrative circles.

It has been discussed and established in Section I.3, that English plays an important role in communication in the international arena. This research focuses on the importance of the spoken skill for communication. Before we go further to investigate issues pertinent to the sociocultural content of ELT video materials, incorporating issues such as the pedagogical model of speech for language teaching materials, it is necessary to provide the general linguistic background of the Varieties of English that exist in the Malaysian English-speech community.

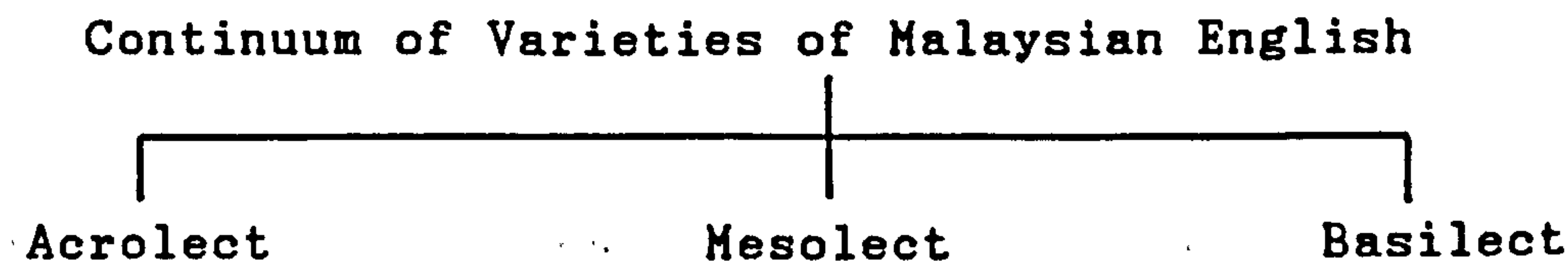
I.5 Varieties of Malaysian English

When a language has gone on such varying and diverse journeys, then it cannot help but be influenced and assimilated by the different linguistic repertoires it comes into contact with. As a result of this and the different statuses and roles it has experienced, English has evolved into a number of different varieties.

In consequence, speakers possess varying levels of mastery of the language and are able to speak different varieties of the language depending on when and where they were educated and the type of linguistic background they have in their home environments.

I.5.i Profile of English-Speaking Malaysians and the Varieties of English

Spoken English in Malaysia can be ranged along a three-tier continuum, from the acrolect, moving onto the mesolect and ending with the basilect.



These terms have been used by a number of researchers, (Bickerton: 1975), (Platt and Weber: 1980), and are useful terms for describing varying aspects of particular languages.

Bickerton (1975, p.24) in using the term 'basilect' explains that,

"'basilect' will be used to refer to that variety of Guyanese Creole most distinct from English, 'acrolect' to refer to educated Guyanese English (a variety which differs from other standard varieties of the language only in a few phonological details and a handful of lexical items), and 'mesolect' to refer to all intermediate varieties ... It should be strongly emphasised that the entities thus referred to represent sectors of a continuum and should in no circumstances be reified as discrete objects (in the way that languages or dialects are traditionally reified). They are named in this way solely for convenience of reference: they blend into one another in such a way that no non-arbitrary division is possible." (Bickerton: 1975, p.24)

Similarly, in Malaysian English, there is no clear demarcation between one sociolect and the other. They all

exist on a continuum but there are certain features which do distinguish one from the other.

The varieties of Malaysian English is a subject that has been dealt with extensively by a number of researchers, (e.g. Platt and Weber (1980), Tongue (1974), Wong (1981, 1983) and Baskaran (1987). Loga Baskaran (1987) provides a clear description of the features of the sociolects that exist in Malaysian English via the following table, which is presented close to the original with slight adaptations in the heading to that of the acrolect, mesolect and basilect.

Table I.2

Features of Socioclects of Malaysian English

	Acrolect	Mesolect	Basilect
	(Standard ME) (Formal Use) Internationally Intelligible	(Dialectal ME) (Informal Use) (National Intelligibility	(Patois ME) (Colloquial Use) (Patois Intelligibility and Currency)
Phonology	Slight variation tolerated so long as it is internationally intelligible	More variation tolerated - including prosodic features esp. stress & intonation	Extreme variation - both segmental and prosodic, with intonation so stigmatized - almost unintelligible internationally
Syntax	No deviation tolerated at all	Some deviation is acceptable although it is not as stigmatized as broken English (intelligibility is still there)	Substantial variation/ deviation (National intelligibility)
Lexis	Variation accep- table especially for words not substitutable in an international context (or to give a more localised context)	Lexicalisations quite prevalent even for words having inter- national Eng. substitutes	Major lexical- isation heavily infused with local language items

The three sociolects display varying manifestations at the syntactical, lexical and phonological levels. The acrolect could be the prescribed pedagogical norm necessary for international communication. The mesolect is the variety that is used for intranational communication, between Malaysians of varying ethnicity as a medium of communication and the basilect is the variety used by those on the lower end of the socio-economic scale. This variety is almost unintelligible outside of the speech communities in which it developed.

Generally, it can be said that a person who can speak the acrolect variety is also one who is able to switch with ease to the other two sociolects, depending on the status of the other participants in the interaction. This enables the speaker to close the social distance. One would sound 'stuck-up' if one insisted on using the acrolect variety while talking with someone who speaks only the basilect/mesolect variety. It would clearly impose a distance between the interactors.

The following classification has been drawn up for convenience to portray the link between the members of the English-speaking speech community and the various sociolects. It does not mean to stigmatize a particular group of speakers with a particular lect but it merely

serves as a descriptive classification.

Socio-Economic and
Educational Status

Sociolects

High

Acrolect

Medium

Mesolect

Low

Basilect

The description of the subvarieties that exist under the variety 'Malaysian English' provides the backdrop towards an important discussion of the pedagogical speech model that would be appropriate and acceptable to the Malaysian English language learner.

I.6 Pedagogical Model of the Recommended Speech Variety

A pedagogical model of speech is necessary for the standardisation of the implementation of the various components related to language teaching - ranging from material preparation, whether text or video, to the formulation of evaluative tests for language courses. Kachru explains the usefulness of defining the pedagogical model. He says,

"In pedagogical literature the term "model" entails a prescriptivism with reference to a specific variety

of a language or a dialect; it is therefore, a useful concept both for language acquisition and for language teaching. In a sense, then, a model implies a linguistic ideal which a teacher and a learner keep in mind in imparting instruction or in learning a language." (Kachru: 1986, p.117)

The model referred to here by Kachru refers to the language variety to be adopted as a model for language teaching. The three sociolinguistic concepts that should be considered when dealing with the selection of a pedagogical model of speech are that of appropriacy, intelligibility and acceptability. (Kachru: 1986, p.115)

In Malaysia and many other third world countries that have been colonised by the British, the natural tendency in the past, with English being the medium of instruction and the language for official requirements, was to adopt Standard British English + RP as the pedagogical model. This was the situation for many years as long as the British determined the political and linguistic policies in this country. Gradually, the possession of political independence and newly found linguistic freedom resulted in a change in Malaysia's language policies, with Bahasa Malaysia becoming the national language and English the second language.

This led to a gradual attitudinal change towards the English Language which took place over many years. This was a change of associating it solely with colonial rule to a more pragmatic attitude of accepting English as a language that is necessary for economic and scientific progress and an essential means of international communication.

With this change, there emerged a more questioning attitude towards the appropriacy of standard British English + RP as the pedagogical model for language teaching purposes in Malaysia. Parallel to this, in seeming dichotomy, was the practical awareness and realisation that, given the necessity of maintaining English as an international language, whichever other model was chosen, it had to be intelligible to English speakers from various parts of the world.

I.6.i Issue of Intelligibility

Intelligibility is a key issue in this discussion of the appropriate and acceptable ELT pedagogical model of speech for the third world countries.

There are a number of different ways in which intelligibility can be regarded. Kachru determines

intelligibility according to the role and status of the participants in any interaction.

"In several countries the use of English entails acquiring repertoires of various subvarieties which are determined by the repertoire of roles one performs in a sub-speech community. In the Indian English speech fellowship one sees a speaker switching from the regionally marked variety (for example, Punjabi English, Kashmiri English) to educated Indian English. Some speakers may even switch over to a variety that is a close approximation of American or British English. Intelligibility, then, is not an absolute criterion but is participant and context-dependent." (Kachru: 1986, p.119)

Quirk on the other hand, argues for a global standard to preserve intercomprehensibility among nations. He points out that "the relatively narrow range of purposes for which the non-native needs to use English (even in ESL countries) is arguably well catered for by a single monochrome standard form." (Quirk: 1985, p.6)

To further avoid confusion between the various roles of English and the call for intelligibility, it would be

useful at this point to make a distinction between the local varieties of English used in many countries for intranational communication and the variety of English that is used for communication between nations and which therefore has to be internationally intelligible.

"These two roles are not and need not be in conflict. It is as though English has become and is on the way to becoming two language types - one international and the other local, with the latter further subdividing into numerous separate entities. Quirk's arguments for global standards apply to the first type of English, not to the second." (Sridhar: 1985, p.271)

Kachru's arguments do not contradict Quirks' - as he says, the issue of intelligibility is dependent on the participants as well as the context in which the language is used. Therefore, the appropriacy of the variety of language used depends on the functions it is used for - if it is for intranational purposes, then so long as the variety is intelligible to the particular speech community one has occasion to interact with, it should be totally acceptable. On the other hand, if the variety is for international communication between peoples from different countries, then the variety selected has to be

internationally intelligible.

In the case of Malaysia and other ASEAN countries, for pragmatic reasons, it is English for international communication that we must concern ourselves with and prescribe a pedagogical model of speech for.

As has been previously discussed, in Malaysia, the pedagogical model of speech used to be Standard British English. Presently, Malaysians speak various varieties of English depending on their social and educational backgrounds. In the literature, these varieties are commonly referred to as the acrolect, the mesolect and the basilect. (See Section I.5 for a description of the varieties).

In response to this move away from the educated native speaker to the educated non-native speaker as the standard model of speech, a number of researches have been carried out on the appropriacy and acceptability of the various varieties of English as a pedagogical model for instructional purposes.

I.6.ii Research on Varieties of English and the Pedagogical Model

One was a small-scale study carried out by Chandrasegaran (1981, p.10) which concentrated solely on the tolerance of student teachers towards "the use of basilectal structures for formal instruction and informal interaction in the domain of education." The basilectal variety, as defined previously is spoken by those on the lower end of the socio-educational scale and is the variety that is unintelligible to those outside of the particular speech community. Her findings indicate that "more than half the trainees consider it unacceptable for a teacher to use basilectal structures either in formal lessons or in informal interaction with his pupils." She goes on to say that, "there is a considerable degree of tacit agreement among teachers, whether trained or under training, that the norm for teaching is Standard English or the acrolect of Malaysian English and the basilect is definitely unacceptable." (Chandrasegaran: 1981, p.10) This is despite the fact that these trainees were not themselves able to speak the acrolect variety. Thus with regards the various varieties used in Malaysia, it is clear from this study that the variety that is favoured is the acrolect variety of Malaysian English.

Another study carried out in the Philippines by Emma Santos-Castillo (1968) discovered that,

"Contrary to predictions, positive attitudes towards Americans were not crucial in the Filipino's desire to learn English. Rather, feelings of satisfaction with the Philippine community were associated with the integrative motive, and English achievement. This association suggests that English is perceived in part as a Philippine language and that the integrative motive to learn English in the Philippines derives from an identification with a set of Filipinos, and this particular set is believed to constitute a Filipino English speaking community."
(Quoted from Llamzon: 1979, p.132)

I.6.iii Emergence of Educated Non-native English Variety as Pedagogical Model

What seems to be emerging as a pedagogical model in non-native English speaking countries is the educated variety of English. (Kachru: 1985, p.24) 'Educated' here is defined as "formal education, usually up to and including the tertiary level." (Smith: 1983, p.57) In these educated varieties of ASEAN English, there is agreement that for intelligibility to be maintained, the syntax

should remain as close to the norm (which in Malaysia's case for historical reasons is Standard British English) as possible. The lexis should remain as close to the standard as possible with variation permitted in instances where local expressions have no substitute in the English language. The phonology is the aspect that is treated flexibly because in speech it is how you sound that reflects your ethnic identity and in speaking English, it is important that one does it clearly and well to accomplish a particular function and yet maintain one's ethnic identity.

This is in line with Strevens's definition of Standard English which can be applied in any EIL situation. He describes it as:

"a particular dialect of English, being the only non-vocalized dialect, of global currency without significant variation, universally accepted as the appropriate educational target in teaching English; which may be spoken with an unrestricted choice of accent." (Strevens: 1983, p.88)

Dialect here refers to the grammar and vocabulary, while accent refers to pronunciation.

In keeping with this in the Malaysian situation what could be appropriate would be to adopt as pedagogical model, the educated non-native speaker whose syntax control is close to the native-speaker norm and yet who does not possess the RP accent of the native-speaker but possesses an accent that is acceptable to the learner. This falls in line with the acrolectal variety of Malaysian English which possesses features of:

Phonology where a "slight variation is tolerated so long as it is internationally intelligible"; syntax where "no deviation is tolerated at all" and lexis where "variation is acceptable especially for words not suitable in an international context, or to give a more localised context." (Baskaran: 1987, p.53)

Even though officially, no mention is specifically made of the pedagogical model of speech to adopt for English language teaching purposes, implicitly it is assumed that it is not the standard British English + RP speaker that one is pedagogically aiming for but a model that enables the learners to "communicate effectively and be internationally intelligible in his speech" (The English Syllabus for Forms I - III, p.1) Children should speak "in such a way that they will be understood not only by fellow Malaysians but also by speakers of English from

other parts of the world." (Teacher's Handbook for the Post - 1970 Primary School English Syllabus (Items 1-64), (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 1973, p.1) This requirement of the pedagogical model of speech, parallels the need for a language that is internationally intelligible and which maintains its distinct identity through a variation in the accent.

I.6.iv Issue of Accent Variation

Firth, the renowned British sociolinguist had as early as 1930 with great foresight and wisdom commented that,

"Educated English shows a wide range of permissible variation. Speakers of this kind of English do not necessarily submerge all signs of social or geographical origin. Their accent is often unmistakably local and characteristic of a class. Educated English is spoken by all classes of people all over the English speaking world. This is the only kind of English that has the remotest chance of universality even in Great Britain itself." (Firth: 1930, reprint 1964: 196)

This free variation with the accent is what the non-native speakers use to socially identify themselves as belonging

to a particular country. This sentiment is echoed by T.T.B. Koh, Singapore's former representative to the United Nations:

" when one is abroad, in a bus or train or aeroplane and when one overhears someone speaking, one can immediately say this is someone from Malaysia or Singapore. And I should hope that when I'm speaking abroad my countrymen will have no problem recognising that I am a Singaporean." (cited in Tongue: 1974)

A point of concern regarding this issue is whether in actual fact, this free variation of accent could impede intelligibility.

Quirk states in no uncertain terms that pronunciation,

"is the least institutionalized aspect of Standard English, in the sense that, provided our grammar and lexical items conform to the appropriate national standard, it matters less that our pronunciation follows closely our individual regional pattern. This is doubtless because pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' rather than the discrete 'this or that' features of

grammar and lexicon." (Quirk et.al.: 1972, p.20)

In contrast with the above support for the total adoption of degrees of ethnic accents, I would like to remind speakers of the possible danger in the enthusiastic support of ethnic accents. Granted that if one possesses a typical non-native variety phonology, one will be recognised as belonging to a particular country. But what is the value of such recognition, if the purpose of learning English is to be able to communicate internationally and the very adoption of the non-native speaker phonology, if it deviates greatly from the norm, (in this case the native-speaker norm) prevents this communication from taking place effectively in intercultural communicative interactions? One way of resolving the issue of accents is to view it in relation to the participants, function and context in which it is used - whether for intranational or international purposes.

In line with this, Quirk rightly says that pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' but I feel that caution should be applied to the degree of variance allowed for the pedagogical model on this gradient. If the language is used for intranational communication, and it is important for a particular

speech community to speak with a particular accent to reflect a certain ethnic identity, then a greater degree of accent variation should be natural and acceptable. On the other hand, for international communication, too extreme a degree of variation might provide the possession of ethnic identity at the cost of intelligibility.

I.6.v Necessity of both Pedagogical Goal and Model

In the Malaysian context, English is learnt for international communication. Therefore, it is essential to minimise the chances of destandardisation of the educated Malaysian variety. One way in which the destandardisation process can be slowed down is by linking the educated Malaysian English variety to its original form 'standard British English' via Brumfit's distinction between a goal and a model.

A model acts as "a consistent reference point for teaching" and it must be "intelligible internationally." In EIL situations, to adopt such a model is not to demand that all speakers in a particular community are expected to become indistinguishable from the model in their speech." (Brumfit: 1980, p.86) Instead, it is the goal that the learners are encouraged to aspire to in learning the language.

Lim, in discussing the goal recommended in the Singapore situation has a message for us all in the ASEAN countries when she says,

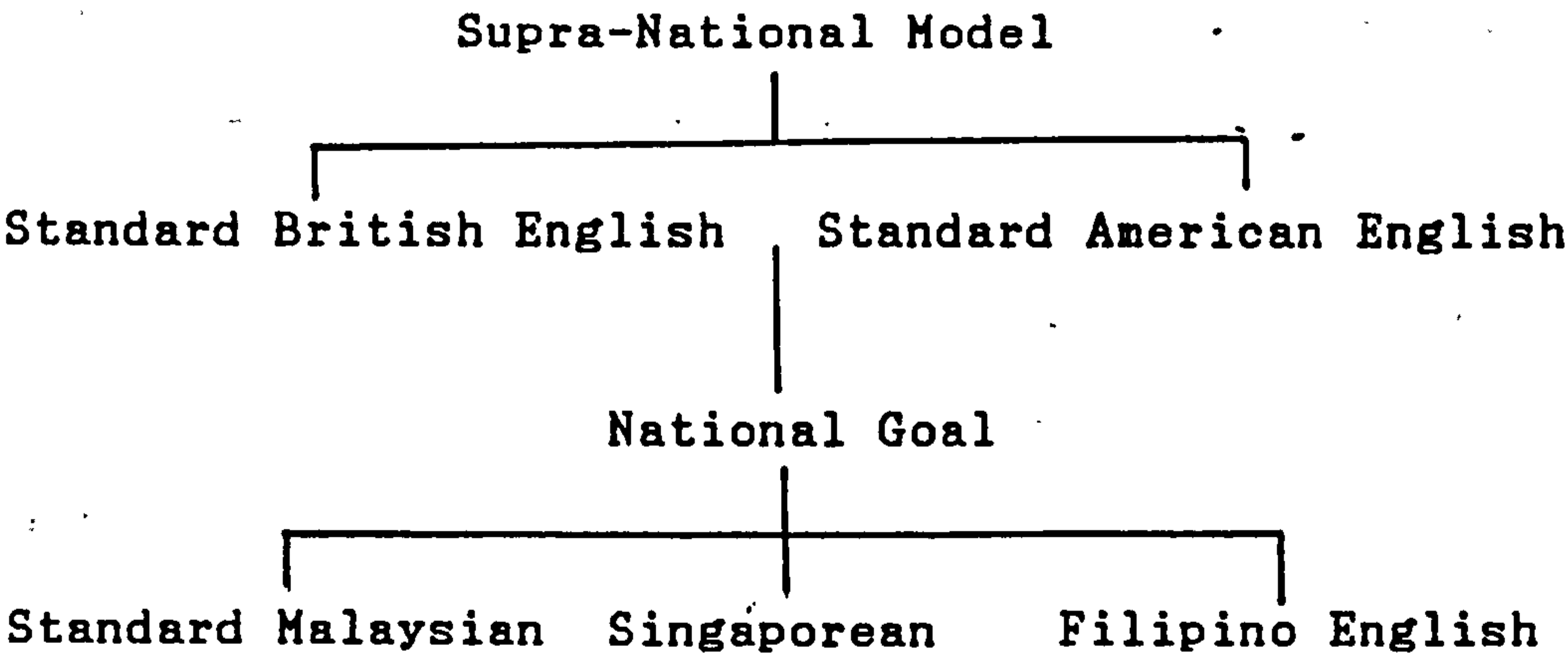
" since the majority of these speakers speak a localised variety, their goal cannot be other than the variety represented by their own linguistic group. But the presence of a model no matter how remote from the goal ensures that the goal maintains the balance between local appropriacy and international intelligibility." (Lim: 1986, p.333)

To further establish the importance of a theoretical norm, it is useful to refer to the issues discussed at the 50th Anniversary of the British Council, which was attended by leading figures from both the ESL and EFL countries. In one of the summaries, it was stated that,

"the effectiveness of the language as a means for international communication would be compromised if there were no common norms of reference. The very establishment of different national standards would be a very difficult descriptive task and would also involve policy decisions in education for their maintenance Allowance would always have to be made for some variation of norms, as there is in such

ENL countries between British and American standards, but unless there were close correspondence the mutual intelligibility which was a requirement for the international use of the language for cross-cultural communication would be seriously impaired." (Quirk and Widdowson: 1985, p.35)

Quirk places the various aspects into perspective when he says that British English could be regarded as 'supra-national' in the sense that it incorporates what is common to all national standards. The following diagram displays the link between models and goals.



I.7 Multi-Ethnic Dimension on the Issue of the Pedagogical Model

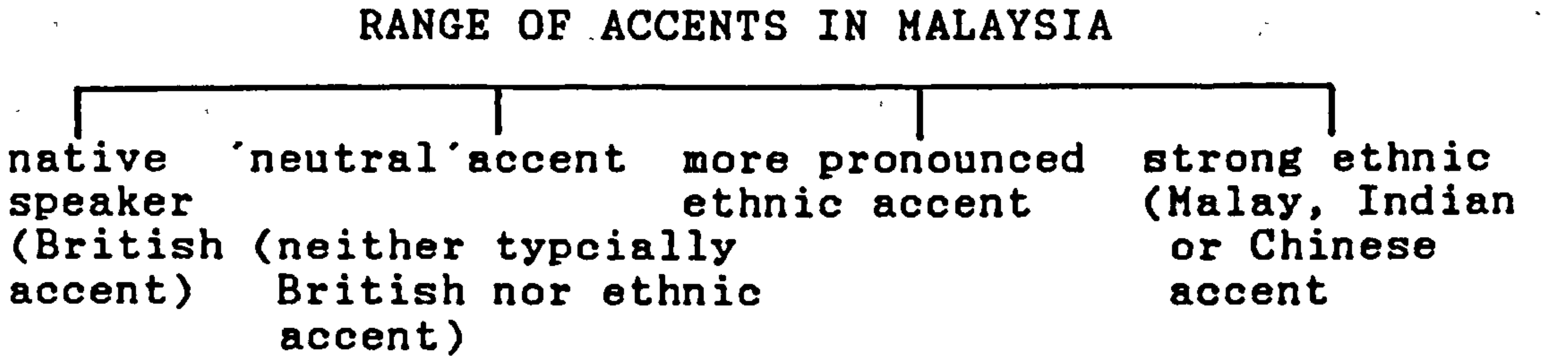
In Malaysia, as discussed earlier, what could be recommended as the goal is the educated non-native speaker. But Malaysia is made up of three dominant racial groups. Therefore, in this multi-ethnic society, what has to be further considered is the socio-political situation which adds a new and important dimension to this issue of acceptability of the pedagogical model of speech.

Malaysia is made up of three different ethnic groups - the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians who possess different cultural backgrounds. Malaysians speak English with varying degrees of their respective ethnic accents. Therefore, when reference is made to the acceptable model, which of the three different ethnic accents are acceptable to the various English language learners in Malaysia? This will be investigated practically in Chapter Five.

For now, due to the complicated situation in Malaysia, what could be recommended as a pedagogical model of speech is an educated non-native Malaysian speaker, who could be either a Malay, Chinese or Indian who speaks in standard grammar but with an unmarked accent which is neither strongly ethnically Malay, Chinese, Indian nor British.

As Brumfit recommends in general terms "in interests of pupil motivation, realism and cultural appropriacy, the best goal for the non-native speakers of English is the English of the most educated and articulate speakers of English in his own linguistic group." (Brumfit: 1980, p.86) It is therefore the "most educated and articulate speakers of English" in the various Malaysian ethnic groups that might fit the necessary role of pedagogical model for the teaching and learning of English as an International language.

Very generally, as depicted in the diagram below, the range of accents in Malaysia extend on a continuum of at one extreme, a near-native accent ranging to a strong ethnic accent, be it an Indian, Chinese or Malay accent. There exists in Malaysia a group of educated and articulate English speakers, who are made up of Chinese, Malays and Indians, who could be placed at one extreme of the continuum of possessing an unmarked accent, which is neither typically British nor ethnic.



One of the possible criticisms of the recommendation of this variety as the pedagogical model of speech is that it is a variety that constitutes a 'dying breed'. With Bahasa Malaysia being the medium of instruction in the educational system, it will be more and more difficult for speakers to attain the educated variety of English. It has to be agreed that the numbers will decrease, but there will still exist a proportion of the population who will be able to speak the acrolect variety of Malaysian English, which is the recommended pedagogical model of speech.

I.8 Existence of a Standard Malaysian English Speech Community

At present, the generation of persons who were educated in the English-medium and who possess fluent command of the educated variety, are "in the prime of life and play leadership roles in government and trade ..." (Augustin: 1982, p.251) On the other hand, admittedly, with the younger generation, the numbers of fluent speakers of the language are much reduced. This is not to paint a totally dismal picture of the situation because as Noss explains,

"good English speakers and writers are still being produced by the formal education system - an

estimated 10 per cent of school leavers at present. This is attributed to the fact that the educational base has been expanded: formerly, less than a third of Malaysians attended English-medium schools, and the remainder did not get very good English instruction: now all are required to study English, and the cream still rises to the top. "Standards" of English have admittedly fallen, but the pool of competent English users is still being augmented." (Noss: 1986, p.50)

I.9 Conclusion

Having described the sociolinguistic profile of English in Malaysia, it is quite clear that it is absolutely essential for political and economic reasons to ensure that Malaysia has a proportion of the population that possesses proficiency in being able to communicate effectively internationally. The following quotation expresses succinctly the value and purpose in communicating via English as an International Language. Bygate says,

"Speaking is, however, a skill which deserves attention every bit as much as literary skills, in both first and second languages. Our learners often

need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of the most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged, and through which they may make or lose friends. It is the vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of personal advancement and of business." (Bygate: 1987, p.vii)

Chapter Two: Spoken Cross-Cultural Communication in an EIL Context

II.1 Introduction

Chapter One has delineated the role, functions and importance of English as an International Language (EIL), generally in the ASEAN region and more specifically in Malaysia. English is used as a means of communication between speakers of English the world over - that is, between speakers who do not share a common language and who therefore need English to communicate and interact with each other.

The next issue that emerges is what constitutes the teaching of EIL in Malaysia and the ASEAN countries? If English is to function as a means of communication between persons of varying sociocultural backgrounds, both native and non-native, then, what needs to be taught and what do language learners have to be sensitized to, to enable potential language learners to carry out effective cross-cultural communication?

II.2 Pedagogical Constituents of Spoken Communication

Firstly, a learner of any language, whether interacting with native speakers from the same community or non-native speakers from different communities, would have to possess a knowledge of the basic components of the language - that is, the grammar, lexis and phonology. The manifestations of the pedagogical goal of the language to be taught would depend on the sociolinguistic nature of the context in which it is used and the purpose for which it is used. In Malaysia and most other South East Asian countries, the recommended pedagogical goal, as discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.6, is the local educated variety of English, whose syntax is close to Standard British English, with variations in lexical formulations suitable for local needs and accents to manifest ethnic identities.

Before the sixties, the teaching of the spoken language was largely based on the audio-lingual approach. This emphasised the manifestation of the structures of the language and focused on the correctness of the formulation of the structural aspects of the language.

But as the literature on the communicative approach to the teaching of the spoken language inform us, it was not sufficient to concentrate solely on the knowledge of the

structural components of the language. Since language serves as a tool for communication and especially in the EIL context, a tool for cross-cultural communication, it is important to be able to apply the knowledge of language appropriately according to acceptable socio-cultural norms to facilitate communication between persons from varying sociocultural backgrounds. This entails knowing in addition to the rules of language, the rules of use. (Hymes (1972), Gumperz (1972) and Widdowson (1978)).

Widdowson (1978) in his often-quoted distinction between 'use' and 'usage' reflects the gradual move away from the structural emphasis on language teaching to the adoption of a more communicative approach. He says,

"Usage is one aspect of performance, that aspect which makes evident the extent to which the language user demonstrates his knowledge of linguistic rules. Use is another aspect of performance: that which makes evident the extent to which the language user demonstrates his ability to use his knowledge of linguistic rules for effective communication."

(Widdowson: 1978, p.3)

This distinction is based on the fact that in communication, we utilise a knowledge of the linguistic

structure of the language to achieve a particular communicative purpose. In communication "we do not simply manifest the abstract system of the language; we at the same time realize it as meaningful communicative behaviour." (Widdowson: 1978, p.3)

This entails understanding and using both the appropriate verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication in social contexts, that is, possessing sociolinguistic competence. Thus the focus in language teaching moved to one in which the emphasis was not only on the linguistic system but also on the ability to use appropriate language in social contexts because,

"Until a learner knows how to use the resources of grammar to send meaningful messages in real life situations he cannot be said to know the language. He must know what variety to use in what situation, how to vary the style according to whom he is addressing, when to speak or remain silent, when and what kind of gestures are required to go with what speech." (Crisper and Widdowson: 1975, p.156)

The appropriacy of communication depends on the sociocultural context in which it is applied. Different sociocultural contexts require different manifestations of

the sociolinguistic components.

II.2.i The Importance of Sociocultural Factors

Hymes in his legendary work on communicative competence emphasised the importance of sociocultural factors as he worked on it from the perspective of the ethnography of speaking, from which parallels can be drawn for the field of communicative language teaching.

Hymes strongly emphasised the necessity of the inclusion of the socio-cultural perspective in any study of the appropriate use of language. He advocates,

"the necessity of a social approach even if the goal of description is a single homogeneous code.

..... If analysis is not to be reduced to explication of a corpus, or debauch into subjectivity, then the responses and judgements of members of the community whose language is analysed must be utilized - and not merely informally or ad hoc, but in some explicit, systematic way. In particular, since every response is made in some context, control of the dependence of judgements and abilities on context must be gained."

(Hymes: 1972, p.276)

Hymes does not suggest in any way that there is one mode of behaviour that is appropriate for language use but instead suggests that the study of language must be carried out in the very context in which it is used, thus implying the existence of a variety of sociocultural contexts which may influence language use in a variety of ways.

Similarly, in the language teaching field, the rules of use which are appropriate and acceptable are dependent on the particular community in which the language is used. Therefore the appropriateness of an utterance in a speech event in a particular speech fellowship is always determined by the social components that exert varying influences at different points in time upon it. The next section takes us onto a discussion of the general parameters of the sociolinguistic components applicable in all sociolinguistic contexts.

II.2.ii General Sociolinguistic Components of Communicative Interaction

What are the sociolinguistic components of communicative interaction? Jakobson (1960) was the first to apply factors from communication theory in the field of linguistics. The various sociolinguistic factors

described by Jakobson and summarised in the following quotation by Hymes are:

"(1,2) the various kinds of participants in communicative events - senders and receivers, addressors and addressees, interpreters and spokesmen and the like; (3) the various available channels and their modes of use, speaking, writing, printing, drumming, blowing, whistling ...; (4) the various codes shared by various participants, linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic, musical and other; (5) the settings (including other communication) in which communication is permitted, enjoined, encouraged, abridged; (6) the forms of messages, and their genres, ranging verbally from single-morpheme sentences to the patterns and diacritics of sonnets, salesman's pitches and any other organized routines and styles; (7) the topics and comments that a message may be about; (8) the events themselves, their kinds and characters as wholes ..." (Hymes: 1972, p.22)

It is from the work of Jakobson and Hymes that Ervin-Tripp (1964, p.86) and Criper and Widdowson (1975, p.186) derived the factors that constitute the components of a conversational speech event in their works - the addressor

and the addressee, the setting, the topic, the message form, the channel and the code.

Participants (Addressor and Addressee)

The most important features of participants will be sociological attributes. These include the participant's status in the society, in terms such as sex, age and occupation; their roles relative to one another such as an employer and his employee, a husband and wife; and roles specific to the social situation, such as hostess-guest, teacher-pupil and customer-salesgirl and the resultant distribution of power in the various relationships.

Setting - this will be used in two senses:

- i. locale or time and place
- ii. situation - social situations may be restricted by cultural norms which specify the appropriate participants, the physical setting, the topics and functions of discourse and the style.

Topic

This includes the subject matter (economics, household affairs, gossip), and the propositional content of utterances.

Message Form

Grammatical and lexical form of individual utterances.

Code

Expression of a message through a linguistic or paralinguistic code, which for communication to take place has to be known by both participants in an interaction.

Channel

The message which is sent from the addresser to the addressee is transmitted through a channel. In conversation, one makes use of both the aural channel of speech and the visual channel of gesture. An interactor uses speech for varying functions and the language variety and the non-verbal gesture one uses depends on the situational factors in the context and the function and meaning one wants to put across in an interaction.

II.2.iii Non-Verbal Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communication

The concentration in the field of language teaching has mainly been on the verbal mode of communication. In comparison, the non-verbal mode, which incorporates the vocal and non-vocal elements (Laver and Hutcheson: 1972, p.12) has been a relatively neglected one.

Therefore, it would be appropriate at this point, given that a large part of the information message is communicated through the non-verbal channel, to emphasise its role in communication. In an interaction, listening and speaking processes interact with each other and an exchange of information takes place. But in both these events, there is not only the verbal but also the visual element which adds to the meaning of the entire communication. Speaking involves not only production of words (the verbal channel) but also intonation, voice quality and the use of gesture, movements of the muscles of the face and indeed the whole body.

"We speak with our vocal organs but we converse with our entire bodies; conversation consists of much more than a simple interchange of spoken words ... Paralinguistic phenomena are non-linguistic elements in conversation. They occur alongside spoken language, interact with it and produce together with it a total system of communication." (Abercrombie: 1968, reprint 1972, p.64 and 65)

Therefore the study of paralinguistic behaviour is part of the study of conversation. It is beneficial for any language learner to acquire knowledge and be sensitive to the different non-verbal (paralinguistic) components in

the interaction and how they can be used to convey meaning because the "interpretation of such paralinguistic features ... is subject to conventions which are shared with other members of one's culture." (Laver and Hutcheson: 1972, p.13)

Abercrombie states that for paralinguistic activities to be meaningful, they must:

"(a) communicate and

(b) be part of a conversational interaction"

(Abercrombie: 1968, reprint 1972, p.65)

Stemming from the above criteria the following are regarded as paralinguistic elements (both vocal and non-vocal) in any conversational interaction:

Vocal Elements

These are "tones of voice" which are produced "by variations from the social linguistic norm in features of voice dynamics - loudness, tempo, register, tessitura and others ..." (Abercrombie: 1968, reprint 1972, p.68)

Non - Vocal Elements

i. Posture

" ... postural configurations ... are reliable indicators of the following aspects of communication:

- a. they demarcate the components of individual behaviour that each person contributes to the group activities.
- b. they indicate how the individual contributions are related to each other.
- c. they define the steps and order in the interaction - that is, the 'program'. (Schefflen: 1964, reprint 1972, p.225)

ii. Proxemics - the distance at which persons stand from each other varies greatly from culture to culture and the use of the wrong distance - whether too close or too far away can give rise to offence. Hall (1966) established several categories of distance (intimate, personal, social and public) which are manifest differently in the various cultures.

iii. Gestures - "this is superimposed on posture, involves less of the body at any one time and changes more

rapidly." (Willis, J.: 1983, p.35) Willis explicates the role of gestures in communication by discussing the various functions it can fulfill. She classifies some of the functions as follows:

"Use of gesture include dietic reference, as in 'Shall I put these over there?' and giving attitudinal information, as in the dismissive hand and arm gesture that could accompany 'Oh never mind, forget it!'" (Willis, J.: 1983, p.35)

iv. Facial expression - "conveys attitudinal (or 'affective') information both to the hearer, who watches the speaker's face to judge to what extent he is committed to the literal meaning of what he is saying and also to the speaker who watches the hearer." (Willis, J.: 1983, p.38)

Druckman et. al. (1982) discuss the importance of posture and proxemics in interactions as follows:

"Certain seating arrangements, table placements and shapes, and postures during conversation can facilitate communication for members of one culture, while hindering communication for members of another. Impression management can be affected: knowing a culture's spatial preferences increases the chances

of creating a favorable impression; not knowing the preferences could lead to isolation and rejection." (quoted from Soudek, M. and Soudek, L.I.: 1985, p.110)

As will be discussed later, in contexts where learners know their potential interactors then it would be a straightforward matter for material designers to focus on the non-verbal behaviour of a particular group of people as implied above. But in the application of EIL, where one is most of the time uncertain of the sociocultural background of potential interactors, the above suggestion has to be applied with modifications that will be discussed in greater detail later - that of increasing learners' awareness to the different manifestations of non-verbal behaviour and not focusing on one particular group. (See Section II.6)

On the whole, as stated earlier, the paralinguistic elements of any conversational interaction has been a relatively neglected component in the pedagogy of the spoken language. This is unfortunate because,

"Non-native speakers of any language are likely to rely more heavily on visual clues to support their comprehension than are native speakers, yet few

language *course-books deal more than fleetingly with the interpretation of visual elements, e.g. non-vocal communication and importance of setting." (Willis,J: 1983, p.29)

N.B.

One of the reasons for this could be that the qualities that text-books possess do not equip them with the ability to portray the paralinguistic aspects of communication, which incorporates not only the static visual but also dynamic movement, which is an essential aspect of any interaction. Learners of a language often find it difficult to interact over a phone partly because of the lack of the visual dimension. This therefore calls for a medium that enables the dynamic visual movement to be portrayed. Video, as an audio-visual aid, should be ideally suited to present the synchronisation of both the non-verbal and verbal elements of communication which can both convey meaningful messages and attitudes. (This function of video is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter Three, Section III.5).

II.2.iv Varying Sociocultural Manifestations of Verbal and Non-Verbal Speech Behaviours

The manifestations of the general sociolinguistic components which incorporate verbal and non-verbal speech behaviour are culture-specific and as discussed earlier, dependent on the socio-cultural setting in which the communicative event takes place. In acquiring the first language, learners automatically also acquire modes of speech behaviour peculiar to their sociocultural background, which encompass different expressions of speech-acts, different occasions it is used, different non-verbal behaviour and different discourse strategies, to mention a few. Thus the expression of the above first language aspects will be culture-bound and expressed automatically in the first language. Therefore even though in learning a foreign language, a different language is used, it is the expression of the speech behaviour by the particular speaker that still remains culture-specific.

As Abercrombie appropriately commented years ago, that,

"It seems ... a possible hypothesis, in the present state of our knowledge, that in all cultures conversation communicates more or less the same total

of 'meaning' of all kinds - sense, feeling, tone, intention; or however one wants to divide up referential and emotive components. Where cultural groups differ, however, is in the way the total information is distributed over the linguistic and paralinguistic elements of the conversation." (Abercrombie: 1968, reprint 1972, p.69)

II.3 Culture-Specific Speech Behaviours and Problems in Cross-Cultural Communication

It is this varying manifestations of the language in a sociocultural context that can lead to cross-cultural communicative problems between peoples who share neither a common language nor a common sociocultural background. Clyne explains the cultural basis of communication which can lead to problems in the interaction. He says,

"Cultural differences play an important role in marking variation in the rules of communicative competence, i.e. rules extending beyond the sentence level, which determine what is said, how it is said, and who says it in particular situations. It is such variation in communicative behaviour, perhaps far more than deviations in grammar, lexicon and phonology that leads to communication breakdown or

communication conflict. Both of these are due to a mismatch between communicative intention and communicative effect (i.e. one of the interactants failing to interpret the other's intention correctly). Communication breakdown takes the form of misunderstanding or non-understanding. Communication conflict is where this leads to friction between the parties." (Clyne: 1983, p.12)

On the whole, this field of intercultural communication is relatively new, especially regarding facets of communicative interaction between non-native and native speakers as well as between non-native and other non-native speakers, in the domains of English as an International Language. It is these domains that provide a fertile area of research for the future. It will be necessary to conduct this research to provide information which will act as input covering instances of miscommunication or successful communication for video materials for cross-cultural communication.

On the other hand, there has been considerable work done between non-native and native speaker interactions in the dominant native-speaker domain. The following are examples of research carried out in the dominant native-speaker domain.

Clyne (1983) has carried out considerable research in the Australian context - interactions which involve the migrant population who come from varying sociocultural backgrounds and the anglo - Australian population. Thomas (1983) has carried out considerable research in the native and non-native speaker contexts in England; Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts (1979) in the domain of the ethnic minorities interacting with the native-speaker majority in work situations.

Jenny Thomas describes this area of communicative problems in terms of "pragmatic failure", i.e. "the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said'" in a particular socio-cultural context. (Thomas: 1983, p.91)

Quirk and Widdowson elaborate on this aspect of communication by explaining that,

"On the question of comprehension, it was noted that this was not only a matter of reference to shared norms of the language code as such, but also, just as crucially, a matter of understanding and adjusting to the different discourse strategies which were used for interaction by different groups of speakers. The achievement of mutual intelligibility depends also on an understanding of norms of social behaviour, so

that even if there were general conformity to a common standard of English this would not guarantee comprehension across cultures." (Quirk and Widdowson: 1985, p.37)

It is the communicative problems which stem from the use of different "discourse strategies" and "norms of social behaviour" that leads to two types of pragmatic failure; i.e. "the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said.'" These are:

- i. pragmalinguistic failure
- ii. sociopragmatic failure (Thomas: 1983, p.99)

At the outset, it would be relevant to mention that the distinction between the two is not absolute. As Thomas says,

"They form a continuum and there is certainly a grey area in the middle where it is not possible to separate the two with any degree of certainty."
(Thomas: 1983, p.109)

Pragmalinguistic failure is defined in Thomas's terms as communicative problems which may arise due to "the inappropriate transfer of speech act strategies from one

language to another, or the transferring from the mother tongue to the target language of utterances which are semantically /syntactically equivalent, but which, because of different 'interpretive bias' tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the target language." (Thomas: 1983, p.101)

Pragmalinguistic failure occurs "when the pragmatic force mapped on to a linguistic token or structure is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by native speakers." (Thomas: 1983, p.101) For example, the usage of polite terms varies from the Russian speaker compared to the British speaker. "The usual way to ask directions, for example, is simply to say (in Russian!) Tell me please how to get to and to use a more elaborate strategy, such as Excuse me, please could you tell me ...? is completely counterproductive, as it often means that your interlocutor is half way down the street before you finish speaking. Transferred into English, such direct imperatives seem brusque and discourteous." (Thomas: 1983, p.102)

It is this that Gumperz, one of the notable researchers in the field of inter-ethnic communication describes as one of the basic problems in inter-ethnic communication. Similarly, he adopts the view that,

"language problems in communication are not only to do with correct pronunciation, grammar and with the production of intelligible sentences; These breakdowns may be linguistic because there are linguistic skills involved in maintaining conversational continuity and building up what sounds like a reasonable and polite argument and these skills are automatic, that is learned as part of a speaker's linguistic background and subject to cross-cultural variation." (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.9)

Gumperz provides three examples of Asian-English conventions which tend to destroy a sense of logic and relevance for an English-English speaker.

- "a. In English-English, a key topic word is often repeated in order to establish the immediate relevance of the answer or comment. This often rhythmic repetition of a key word or phrase seldom happens with Asian-English speakers.
- b. In Asian-English, it is customary to repeat some part of what the speaker has just said, although it may not be relevant to the point being made in reply. This may give a sense of being repetitive or

inconsistent.

- c. In some Asian-English styles of speaking, too direct a response is avoided. The speaker responds first of all in a general sort of way, only moving later to his important specific points. The English-English style of logic is the opposite, and this means that the English-English listener may well have switched off before the important point occurs, particularly if the differences under (a) and (b) are also present." (Gumperz et.al.: 1979, p.13)

Other aspects of communication that are culture-specific and which have been related to Gumperz's inter-ethnic communicative research are "non-verbal communication ("body language") ..., prosody (that is, "intonation, stress or voice inflection") and the thematic structure of conversation.

An example of the difference in the prosodic usage of the Asian-English speaker and the English-English speaker is that of the use of tone of voice and stress. "An Asian person using English makes much less use of tone of voice and stress than an English person. Asian-English uses pitch level and rhythm, to signal emphasis in ways which are associated in English-English with

expressiveness and contrastiveness. Thus the two systems of English are very different in this respect and there is consequently great scope for misinterpretation between the two systems." (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.11)

On the other hand, there is a large component of cross-cultural pragmatic problems which has been termed sociopragmatic failure which does stem directly from differences in norms of social behaviour, which, in turn, stem from learners' system of beliefs and values and which they will be more sensitive to if required to change. Sociopragmatic failure stems from "cross-cultural mismatches in the assessment of social distance, of what constitutes an imposition, of when an attempt at a 'face-threatening act' should be abandoned, and in evaluating relative power, rights and obligations etc." (Thomas: 1983, p.104)

Cultures differ greatly in terms of topics that can be asked about freely in a conversation. The British and the other native-speakers generally find questions about income, marital status, religion, home etc. intrusive and an imposition on them personally. Malaysians on the other hand regard these areas as normal topics for discussion and questions on these topics do not pose any problems in their cultural environment.

In terms of variances in judging relative power or social distance, Jenny Thomas provides an example. She says in a student's own culture, teachers may have a higher status than they would in a native-speaker environment (a social judgement). This would lead the student to behave more differentially than would be expected and potentially lead onto sociopragmatic failure. (Thomas: 1983, p.105)

In contrast with pragmalinguistic problems,

"Sociopragmatic decisions are social before they are linguistic, and while foreign learners are fairly amenable to corrections which they regard as linguistic, they are justifiably sensitive about having their social (or even political, religious or moral) judgement called into question." (Thomas: 1983, p.104)

Thomas recommends, albeit in the non-native and native speaker ESL context, that these linguistic aspects of pragmalinguistic failure which pose problems in cross-cultural communication can be taught according to the speech behaviours of the native-speaker (who would be the dominant group in this case). This is possible because she says,

"In general, I would suggest that the foreign learner is not noticeably more sensitive about having pragmalinguistic failure pointed out to him/her, than about having grammatical errors corrected. Insofar as s/he is prepared to learn the language at all, s/he is usually willing, if not able, to try to conform to the pragmalinguistic norms of the target language." (Thomas: 1983, p.103)

EIL speakers naturally would, unless consciously made aware and taught otherwise, use the discourse strategies and speech act transference from the first language.

But given that pragmalinguistic competence stands on one extreme of a continuum from that of sociopragmatic competence, as a language teacher, I would recommend that the language-specific aspects of pragmalinguistic competence be taught to an EIL speaker as well. This can be done through extending the components of the pedagogical model of speech to include the grammatical manifestations of the appropriate language structures in informal and formal registers, to express particular speech acts.

The criticism that could be made against this is that learners should be provided with the opportunity to

express themselves as they so wish in their own culture-specific ways in cross-cultural interactions. But it must be remembered that the pragmalinguistic problems are not entirely based on social norms of behaviour but on linguistic expressions which can be easily learnt and which if not prescribed, then leaves the basis of English as an International Language as too flexible for the prescriptive decisions that would need to be made by course designers and material writers. This measure would in addition, provide the learners with options - it is through information such as these that they can then decide for themselves whether they want to use pragmalinguistic knowledge based on the native-speaker pedagogical model or retain their own culture-specific expressions of particular speech acts. Clyne (1983), Johnson (1982) and Thomas (1983) are in agreement regarding this approach when they say that learners must be provided with the choice of being intentionally rude.

Johnson sums it up by saying,

"However personal our use of language, it is controlled by rules which every native speaker knows. One such rule (put crudely) says: "If you want to make a polite request in English, you can use "Would you mind ...", if you wish to be direct, or even

... rude, you can use the imperative." It is a rule that the student should know; but by teaching it we are not thrusting a personality on him. Our duty is to tell him what impression he will convey by using such and such a form, but it is for him to decide which impression in a given situation he wishes to convey. The teacher tells the student how to be rude or polite; the student decides whether to be rude or polite." (Johnson: 1982, p.30)

Since sociopragmatic decisions are culture-specific, they should not be corrected but analysed and discussed. These are aspects which cannot be consciously taught as they delve from the culture of the interactor and thus constitute his personal makeup. Learners should be made aware of these variances in sociopragmatic behaviours. (This will be discussed in greater detail in Section II.6).

Thus the above discussion based on Thomas's distinction of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic problems has identified two components essential for the learning of English as an International language. Granted, as mentioned earlier, the distinction does not deal with absolutes but forms a continuum which extends from the use of appropriate grammatical forms in particular

sociolinguistic contexts (which lend themselves to be more easily prescribed by the language teacher) and variances in culture-specific speech behaviour which should not be corrected but analysed and discussed.

Given that there is this existing knowledge of the varying manifestations of the sociolinguistic components in the appropriate use of language, and a strong growing awareness that different sociocultural groups "manifest speech behaviour in culture-specific ways, the next question that arises is "How has the field of English language teaching approached what constitutes an important area of cross-cultural communication?"

II.4 Traditional ELT Approach to Sociolinguistic Components

ELT literature (both ESL and EFL) does reflect in principle the awareness that the sociolinguistic components which influence the use of language are manifested in various ways depending on the sociocultural environment in which they are applied. Wilkins expresses this briefly when discussing the notional/functional approach to language teaching. He says,

"The conventions that relate the linguistic form of

an utterance to its actual communicative effect are not universal. What is permissible in the use of one language may not be permissible in another."

(Wilkins: 1976; p.11)

Johnson discusses in detail the sociolinguistic components that should be considered when planning a course that adopts the functional approach. These range from broad sociolinguistic issues like the geographical region in which the language is to be used, to the settings, the role relationships and others which are discussed in detail in Section II.2.ii. In addition he disputes the fallacy that is commonly held that,

"... the rules of use are the same in every language. The way we greet, invite, request information is, they would claim, the same in French, German or any other language. As long as the student is able to translate on a fairly literal level from native to foreign language, he will be able to communicate adequately. Anyone who has lived for any length of time in a foreign language community will know that, as an increasing amount of sociolinguistic literature attests, this is just not true."
(Johnson: 1982, p.25)

This sociolinguistic awareness has led to the production of functionally-based materials which do take the above features into consideration and different uses of the language in different instances of formality and informality are portrayed in the materials.

A prime example of the manner in which the above factors were considered in the design of communicative language courses for a particular community is the admirable work of the Council of Europe. "They were concerned with developing a framework for teaching languages to the most general and vague of audiences - the average adult European, living in any number of countries, wishing to learn any of a number of languages for any of a number of purposes." (Johnson: 1982, p.42)

In the Council of Europe work, the needs of the learners in learning English focused on interactions with British native speakers. Most of the literature and coursebooks regarding language learning needs focus on the native and non-native speakers in a European context in the learning of English as a second or foreign language.

Therefore in considering the needs of language learners in an ELL context, the similar general factors would have to be considered with different applications. In addition to

the basic sociolinguistic considerations, it will be necessary to expose students to sociocultural considerations given that they will be communicating in cross-cultural contexts. Even though there is a recognition for this need among a number of applied linguists, as reflected in Johnsons' argument for the necessity of teaching language use because the rules of use are not the same in every language, most of the practical applications in English language teaching do not incorporate sociocultural differences which influence language use in various communities.

This is echoed by Stern who says,

"As a generalization one can say that language teaching theory today is fast acquiring a sociolinguistic component but still lacks a well-defined sociocultural emphasis." (Stern: 1983, p.246)

As it stands, most of the works that have emerged from the traditional ELT stronghold of the United Kingdom are based in native-speaker contexts. Even though there is the theoretical realisation that different sociocultural contexts possess different sociolinguistic applications, the practical applications do not seem to have gone beyond

this. The practical applications, as they stand, seem to echo Brown's call that,

".... culture, as an ingrained set of behaviours and mode of perception, becomes highly important in the learning of a second language. The acquisition of a second language, except for specialized, instrumental acquisition (as may be the case, say, in "Indian" English), is also the acquisition of second culture. (Brown: 1980, p.124)

Unfortunately, this tends to give the impression that most ELT works have as their implicit assumption the fact that if these sociolinguistic factors are applied appropriately (i.e. according to the norms of native-speaker sociocultural behaviour) in any interaction then the chances of smooth interactions taking place are strong and there should be no communicative problems.

Applied linguists involved in English as an International language have tended to be critical of this almost non-existent practical recognition of the needs of EIL users. Smith criticizes the stance adopted by ELT practitioners who believe that,

"There is one correct set of strategies for discourse

in English and everyone using English attempts to use that set. This hypothesis leads one to believe that when English is the common language, one can expect the words, sentences and discourse to have common meaning across cultures. One may then interpret what is said by an interactor of another culture in the same way it would be interpreted had it been said by a fellow national." (Smith: 1987, p.5)

But rather than delve into criticism of the lack of application of the sociocultural perspectives, as reflected in the materials which incorporate communicative material with a sociocultural focus, it may be opportune and timely for EIL-user countries to work out for themselves the pedagogical implications of EIL. This would entail dealing with issues like the analysis of their particular English language needs, the social contexts in which it is to be used and the sociocultural behaviours involved which could lead to problems in communication. This is supported by Hymes who says,

"... if one analyses the language of a community as if it should be homogeneous, its diversity trips one up around the edges." (Hymes: 1972, p.276)

Therefore, it is only pertinent that individual countries

take the necessary steps to conduct the appropriate research on cross-cultural communication which could act as valuable input for appropriate pedagogical materials.

II.4.i Monomodel vs. Polymodel Approach

Kachru provides the beginnings of the approach that could be adopted in working out the theoretical underpinnings of the practical pedagogical applications of EIL. He does this by contrasting the monomodel and the polymodel approach.

"A monomodel approach presupposes that there is a homogeneous English L2 speech community, and that the functional roles assigned to English in each area are more or less identical. Such a position presupposes that the "context of situation" for the use of English in all the English-speaking areas is identical." (Kachru: 1983, p.84)

He instead, advocates the polymodel approach which is sensitive to the variations in the sociolinguistic contexts and of the varying functional uses of English.

"The assumptions underlying a polymodel approach are diametrically opposed to the monomodel approach. A

polymodel approach is based upon pragmatism and functional realism. It presupposes three types of variability in teaching English for cross-cultural communications; namely, variability related to acquisition, variability related to function and variability related to context of situation."
(Kachru: 1983, p.84)

In the context of this research, this would be a more realistic approach to adopt given the inevitable reality of EIL as a means of interaction between persons of varying sociocultural backgrounds who do not share similar social and cultural assumptions.

With this growing need, what is presently recommended in the literature is not just knowing the speech behaviour of the native speaker but instead being aware of the differences and similarities in the speech behaviours of the interactors who come from varying sociocultural backgrounds.

Smith summarises the above argument succinctly. He says,

"EIL recognises that different language groups have different ways of speaking. These create different discourse patterns which are carried over, in part

into their use of English.

Users of English in international contexts must be prepared to deal with diversity and not to expect that all English users will communicate in ways similar to their own." (Smith: 1987, p.xii)

This is one of the basic principles of EIL and Smith's recommendation is appropriate and acceptable in differing sociocultural environments. This ties in with the fact that in pluralistic sociocultural contexts, there are different ways in which the common language is used to exemplify different functions and it is these that can lead to problems in communication.

II.4.ii Similarity between EIL and the Traditional ELT Approach

To cope with this multiple diversity in EIL contexts, Campbell, Ekniyom and Smith whose opinions reflect that of a great number of researchers in this area, like Candlin (1981), Clyne (1979, 1981), Kachru (1981) and Strevens (1983), believe that,

"a major principle of English as an International Language (EIL) is that when speakers of more than one

country or culture interact, more than one set of social or cultural assumptions will be in operation. Each culture has its own ways of speaking, patterns of discourse and argument, rules of turn-taking, choice of topic in conversation A knowledge of these ways, patterns and rules has to be developed by speakers of EIL if they are going to be concerned with effective cross-cultural communication." (Campbell, Ekniyom, Haque and Smith: 1983, p.35)

Similarly, Wolfson in researching on complimenting among native and non-native speakers of English feels that more research should be carried out across different sociocultural groups to work out systematic studies of the differences among the sociolinguistic behaviours of the different groups to enable more effective communication to take place. She says,

"The theoretical importance of recognizing this variation is that it points to the need for sociolinguistic descriptions of language in use. If true communication is to take place among people who come from differing cultural backgrounds, and if interference is to be minimized in second language learning, then we must have cross-cultural

comparisons of rules of speaking. That is, contrastive analysis must be generalized to include not only the level of form but also the level of function." (Wolfson: 1981, p.123)

Thus, this seems to advocate the principle that to be able to interact effectively with members of a different community requires the knowledge of not only a common language but also the ability to acquire the appropriate social and cultural behaviour of the particular community.

In the recommendation of acquiring knowledge and awareness of culture-specific speech behaviours of a particular group, a parallel can be drawn between the similar approach adopted by researchers in ESL domains and those in the EIL domain, the only difference being the target group/groups that this approach is geared towards. In the ESL domains, what is recommended is the learning of culture-specific speech behaviour of the native-speaker group. In the EIL domain, what is recommended is the learning of culture-specific speech behaviour of the particular group one is interacting with, be it non-native or native.

This view of learning the sociocultural behaviours of a particular group, may be applicable in interactive

situations, where one knows who the potential interactors are going to be. This can be, for instance, between members of a dominant group and a minority group, with the latter adapting in some aspects to the ways of life of the former to enable a peaceful co-existence to take place. But, it could not apply in EIL situations where cross-cultural communication among multiple groups is the norm and it is not possible to predict the sociocultural group of the potential interactor. The very essence of EIL is being able to interact with peoples from various cultures and not just one culture - "to deal with diversity."

This recommendation of the inclusion of knowledge of the culture-specific sociocultural behaviour of different communities in ELT, unavoidably brings into focus two types of learners whose aims in learning the language are basically similar - as a language for communication but whose domains of application are different.

II.5 Different Learner Perspective on Cross-Cultural Communication

II.5.i Learner Needing to Interact in Dominant Group Environment: ESL Context

The first learner is the type that falls in line with the recommendations of most of the literature on the role of cross cultural knowledge which enhances successful interpersonal discourse. This literature, as discussed earlier, recommends that the learner should possess knowledge of the speech behaviours of the particular community.

"To be effective cross-cultural communicators, (one) must learn how other cultures structure information and argument, as well as how they use English to do things such as make refusals, compliments, suggestions etc." (Smith: 1987, p.xi)

These recommendations will be applicable in situations where the learner knows exactly where he needs to apply his language skills. The type of language learner that comes to mind is a student who is aspiring to further his studies in a particular country or a businessman who knows that his business dealings will be with those of a specific country. For this category of learners it will

be useful to teach them the interpersonal discourse styles of the particular community they will be interacting with.

As Clark says,

"In order to conform to another culture's conventions, one may have to learn to manage interactions in a different way, to avoid topics one is used to discussing If one employs one's own cultural patterns in another speech community one may appear either dull of mind or deliberately rude."
(Clark: 1987, p.39)

An example of materials produced for this very purpose are a set of cultural videotapes produced at the Colorado State University. These videotapes "dramatise these situations in which the foreign student encounters conflict or misunderstanding due to cultural bias or ignorance of American values and customs." (Telatnik and Kruse: 1982, p.172) The aim of the tapes is,

"not to focus on the question of the American culture being 'right' and the foreign culture being 'wrong'; the tone and intent of the tapes are to present the American people - their values and habits - without justification, glorification or apology. Rather,

their purpose is to help the foreign student adjust to the community and university and to facilitate the attainment of his personal and educational goals."

(Telatnik and Kruse: 1982, p.172)

II.5.ii Learner Uncertain of Potential Interactor: EIL Context

The second type of learner is one who is as yet uncertain as to who his potential interactors will be. This type of learner could be a student in a University / College or a professional who wants to learn English as an International Language, but is not sure with whom he will be communicating. The one thing that he is sure of is that he needs the language to communicate with other speakers of English who may not all belong to the same community. Most language learners of EIL, are unable to predict where and with whom the interaction will take place in English. It is this type of learner that this research is focused on.

With the world getting smaller and interaction with persons of varying sociocultural backgrounds becoming the norm rather than the exception, this raises the issue of the practicality of the previous recommendation. It is for this type of learner for whom the existing suggestions

in the literature on language and sociocultural behaviour may not be appropriate.

Generally, it sounds ideal to have a focused approach in the teaching of intercultural interpersonal discourse—the focus on the speech behaviours of a particular community. But when a learner is not sure who his potential interactors will be, then which cultural norms do we recommend? How does one decide on one particular community and not the others? The aspect of communication that they are certain of is the uncertainty of their interactors.

Therefore, Bickley, in summarising Baxter's recommendations for effective intercultural communication in the EIL domain, urges that,

"Students must somehow be prepared to operate with English in unknown situations which are characterized by variation in linguistic and cultural behaviour. Central, therefore, to the EIL approach are the realities of diversity and adaptation ... EIL provides ... the means of perceiving that enhanced world communication is possible only through recognizing all those areas of behaviour which are not shared across national or cultural lines."
(Bickley: 1982, p.86)

II.6 Coping with Cross-Cultural Communication

The next question at this stage is, 'What are those areas of behaviour which are not shared across national or cultural lines?'

Baxter, recommends that the area of intercultural training might be a good source from which to work out what this "culture-general combination of behaviours, attitudes and awareness" is.

"The EIL approach has ... taken English teaching much closer to an integration with intercultural training. The goals of EIL and intercultural training are similar. Brislin and Pedersen (1976, p.1) describe the overall goal of intercultural training as 'teaching members of one culture ways of interacting effectively with minimal misunderstanding in another culture.' For EIL, the goal is teaching members of one culture to interact effectively through English with members of other cultures, with minimal misunderstanding." (Baxter: 1983, p.306)

What is important in intercultural communication is the "interactional dynamic that is set up when participants of differing cultural backgrounds engage in verbal

communication." (Baxter: 1983, p.303) In carrying out this interaction, what is essential is the ability to negotiate the meaning of the communication (Candlin: 1981, p.166) and the application of interpersonal skills which are based on a "culture-general combination of behaviours, attitudes and awareness." (Baxter: 1983, p.312)

II.6.i Culture-General Modes of Behaviour

The following list provides an idea of the type of "culture-general combination of behaviours, attitudes and awareness" encouraged in intercultural training. It is taken from Hawes and Kealey (1981) who researched on the overseas effectiveness of Canadian technical advisors and spouses. They found interpersonal skills to be of crucial importance and some of the features are listed below:

- "FLEXIBILITY - flexible response to ideas, beliefs or points of view of others; open
- RESPECT - response to others which helps them feel valued;
- LISTENING - a good listener who accurately perceives needs and feelings of others;
- RELATIONSHIP - demonstrated ability to build and maintain relationships; trusting, friendly and cooperative;

CONTROL - calm and in full control when confronted by interpersonal conflict or stress;
SENSITIVITY - sensitive to local realities, social, political or cultural."

(Hawes and Kealey: 1981)

The list above is valuable but the gap between intercultural training and language teaching can be further narrowed by the inclusion of suggestions made in the vein of Candlin's discussion of the "equalizing of interpretive opportunity" in the cross-cultural communicative context. He says, it is essential for an interactor to possess a sensitivity "to the cultural presuppositions which imbue particular utterances," which is a prerequisite to understanding language as communication" whether through a range of linguistic or paralinguistic signs which are "culturally and socially specific." (Candlin: 1981, p.188)

This necessity of EIL learners having to adapt to the unpredictability and diversity of the situation is further reinforced by Scollon and Scollon who say,

"communicative problems cannot be solved by the obvious but too simple solution that each group learns the other's code. Since multiple groups and

multiple codes are typical, solutions must be sought at a level higher than that of communication between two groups." (Scollon and Scollon: 1983, p.156)

Therefore in a similar vein to Hawes and Kealey's recommendations, their suggestion of a solution to more effective communication between persons of varying sociocultural backgrounds is not to consciously learn about the sociocultural behaviour of the particular groups involved but, instead to adopt,

"the cultivation of an international, interethnic, intercultural communicative style of deference politeness. We must assume at the foundation that communication is difficult and problematical, that we must minimize our impositions on others, that we must leave others the option of not acting on our impositions or acting as they choose, and that we can make only minimal assumptions about the wants, needs, relevancies and priorities of others. The only common ground on which interethnic communication can be based without discrimination is the valued assumption of difference." (Scollon and Scollon: 1983, p.186)

Granted that the possession of the above interpersonal

skills and attitudes will help the learner to develop himself/herself and to possess a frame of reference that would facilitate cross-cultural communication. But the crucial issue following on from this is the pedagogical application of the above recommendations. Before we work on the pedagogical application, it would be relevant to explore the literature on spoken language teaching materials to explore the extent to which issues regarding cross-cultural communication have been incorporated.

II.7 Exploration of Pedagogical Application of Sociocultural Perspectives

As discussed earlier, most of the literature on the teaching of the spoken language does not consider these sociocultural issues which facilitate cross-cultural communication. This ties in with the monomodel approach to language teaching adopted by most ELT practitioners. This is unfortunate considering that,

"Communication and cultural exchange are the pre-eminent conditions of the twentieth century. For the first time in the history of the world, a patchwork of technology and organization has made possible simultaneous interpersonal and intercultural communication." (Adler: 1976, p.363)

Stern provides one of the reasons for this state of affairs by saying that,

"In spite of the common assertion that language and culture cannot be separated, in effect the evidence for the integration of culture and language, frequently proposed in the literature is confined to a small number of observations. The bulk of language teaching is still described in terms which leave it largely unrelated to sociocultural contexts. Too little sociolinguistic research has as yet been presented in a form which makes it feasible to integrate linguistic aspects with their sociocultural concomitants. However, current and future sociolinguistic studies may change that." (Stern: 1983, p.253)

This brings up the issue of the gap between theory and practise in the field of sociocultural communication and whether one should wait for the theory to be refined before implementing new ideas. The present situation is one in which there is a realisation that there exists sociocultural behaviour and assumptions that inhibit effective communication from taking place. On the other hand, the field of research is still in its infancy when compared to the research that has been carried out on the

linguistic system of the language. But, given that the minimal research that has been carried out so far, does reflect a need for an awareness of the sociocultural behaviour of different communities for successful communication to be carried out, does it mean that one should wait for the theoretical aspects to be refined before incorporating basic and valuable principles into ELT materials? In this situation, one would hope not. Widdowson's following remarks, made in the context of the relationship between applied linguistics and linguistics, appropriately provides a solution to this problem. He says,

"The applied linguist does not always have to wait, indeed, he cannot always wait, for the linguist to provide him with something to apply. He may follow his own path towards pedagogic application once the theorist has given a hint of the general direction. He may even, on the way, discover a direction or two which the theoretical linguist might himself explore with profit." (Widdowson: 1979, p.100)

In spite of the overall lack of the pedagogical inclusion of intercultural communication skills in ELT material, mention must be made of some of the materials that do take these issues into account. These are materials designed

to portray the culture-specific speech behaviour of a particular community to enable interactors to gain knowledge and be aware of the social behaviours of that particular community. On the other hand, mention must also be made of materials set in particular sociocultural contexts, but which do not consciously work on the cross-cultural aspects of communication - they concentrate on teaching the language. To exemplify the above, materials that come from three sources - America, Britain and Malaysia will be considered.

The first is a text by Levine and Adelman (1982) which incorporates the intercultural component into their materials skilfully. This text is designed based on the premise that,

"English as a Second Language programs that are solely language-oriented cannot fully assist foreign and immigrant students to understand and adapt to important cultural differences of the host country."

Therefore the aim of the text is to "introduce a substantial cultural component into the ESL classroom while emphasizing three of the basic language skills: reading, vocabulary building and conversation." This is done by including chapters which cover "verbal patterns,

nonverbal communication, personal relationships, family values, educational attitudes, work values, ... cultural conflict and cultural adjustment.

Each chapter in turn has two parts:

- (1) readings and discussion about selected areas of American culture, and
- (2) intercultural communication activities" (Levine and Adelman: 1982, p.ix)

Most of the material available emphasises the sociocultural behaviours of the American native-speaker who belongs to the dominant group. This largely has been because America's population is made up of immigrants from all over the world. Therefore, these immigrants who are new to the country, need to be aware of the differences and similarities in the sociocultural behaviours of the American community with whom they would have to interact with. In addition, these materials are also aimed at the learners from other countries who are in America to pursue higher education or for persons involved in trade and industry or other activities which involves interaction with the dominant group.

In Britain, the English language teaching materials on the

whole do not explicitly deal with these sociocultural issues. The majority of the materials are set in British sociocultural contexts depicting British persons interacting with each other and displaying British socio-behavioural styles of communication. There is the concentration on the functional use of the language with no explicit suggestions of the differences in the sociocultural norms of interaction which result from different sociocultural assumptions. There seems to be the implicit assumption that acquiring the language in its sociolinguistic context, is sufficient to enable communication to take place and it is not necessary to deal with aspects of interpersonal cross-cultural discourse at all.

Brown and Yule (1983), worked on a spoken language teaching methodology based on conversational analysis of interactions between native speakers of English. They mention the fact that in interactional speech, which is the basis for establishing and maintaining social relationships, "much of what the student has learnt about the nature of primarily interactional speech in his own language can be transferred to the foreign language." (Brown and Yule: 1983, p.23)

There is no mention of the problems in communication that

can arise due to the differences in interpersonal discourse in interactional speech. It is implicitly assumed that interaction will go on without any major hitches despite the differences because,

"We assume that normal individuals in any culture easily acquire the ability to participate in primarily interactional chat ... Most interactional chat contains, apart from the more-or-less formal patterns of greeting and farewell, a great deal of expression of opinion by one participant which is then agreed to by the other, who may then take his turn in expressing opinion or merely continue to take the role of agreeing with the other dominant participant." (Brown and Yule: 1983, p.12)

The basic assumption in their approach, similarly raised in the traditional approach to sociolinguistic components (See Section II.4), is that despite the differences in the sociocultural background of the interactors, this should not pose any problems because of the similarity in the interpersonal discourse across cultures. There is no acknowledgement of the differences that may exist and may pose problems. This is based on two false assumptions:

- " (1) If a person has native or native-like grammar, lexis and phonology, appropriate communication will automatically flow; and
- (2) ways of speaking and discoursal patterns of all fluent speakers of English are the same."
- (Smith: 1983, p.v)

In Malaysia, the ELT text producers seem to have reacted adversely to the dominance of native-culture in text materials. They have reverted to the other extreme of adopting only local cultural settings and situations for their English language teaching materials. This has resulted in the production of materials which depict only Malaysian speakers interacting with each other in instances of smooth communication. This may be a practical move at the earlier levels of language learning, where it will benefit learners to learn through situations, characters that are most familiar to them. But at the more advanced stages, e.g. at upper secondary and tertiary levels, then given the role of ELL, attempts should be made to expose learners to interactions between peoples of varying sociocultural backgrounds and not only to Malaysian speakers in Malaysian settings.

All the materials discussed provide for learners who need to interact in a culture-specific environment, whether it

be American, British or Malaysian. The difference though between the latter two and the American text is that they focus on communicative interactions at the level of form and function, in a common sociocultural mode. The interactions therefore reflect instances of smooth communication. They do not exemplify problems of interaction occurring due to pragmatic failure.

These materials are based on the approach of portraying language in use in culture-specific settings, with culture-specific interactors in functionally based interactions, depicting the application of the sociolinguistic components in culture-specific instances.

Unfortunately, the materials do not extend beyond this. They do not cater for the needs of learners who are uncertain of who their potential interactors will be. They do not cater for one of the basic principles of EIL—that is helping learners to cope with principles of diversity and adaptability, acquiring culture-general modes of behaviour that will enable them to adapt to instances of diversity in EIL contexts.

With respect to the lack of inclusion of portrayal of instances of miscommunication to assist in raising "language-awareness", the ELT field could learn from the

research which has been carried out in other areas - in the main, work done by ILTS in the field of inter-ethnic communication, as well as further work in the intercultural training field.

II.8 Recommendations for the Pedagogical Application of the Sociocultural Perspective for EIL learners

II.8.i Lessons to be Learnt from Experience of ILTS

The field of ELT could draw on the experience of the Industrial Language Training Service, in England. They based their research on multi-ethnic communication problems in work places, on the premise that there exist differences in speech behaviours among the various groups. But it must be mentioned though that this was after they had gone through an initial phase of assuming that,

"the major cause of communication problems was the lack of English of many Asians in terms of correct English pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and a consequent lack of ability to produce intelligible and appropriate English sentences in many situations. Such a view (which is widely held by second language teachers) presupposes that the acquisition of a fairly basic level of English, on its own, will

enable Asians to become effective communicators with other ethnic groups But our access to both sides has enabled us to learn a great deal more about the complexity of inter-ethnic communication and to realise that very serious communication problems persist long after people have acquired an elementary grasp of English. We have found problems often exist even with people who have a life time's experience of using English, such as former civil servants from East Africa." (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.7)

It is surprising that the English Language Teaching field has not adopted any of the principles of the research carried out and recommendations made by Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts (1979). They worked on a joint project which researched on inter-ethnic communication difficulties at work situations particularly between employers and employees. One of the products of this research was the film, 'Crosstalk' (Twitchin: 1979) with an accompanying teaching package (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1978). A basic principle of the entire package is that,

"individuals cannot be taught to communicate effectively across cultures; it is something that they must learn to do for themselves. There is no single method which people can acquire, and no set of

rules which they can simply put into practice. The reason for this is that language is used within such a great range of situations and the way language is used has to take account of so many variables. There is no neat way individuals can be told exactly what to do in situations such as job interviews, difficulties at work and so on. Every piece of good communication depends upon the response and feedback which participants in a conversation receive from each other during the conversation itself, and so every speaker has to develop his strategies for interpreting and responding appropriately."

(Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.33)

The above principle possesses a strong parallel to a basic principle of English as an International Language - that of having to cope with the diversity and unpredictability of the situation. Even though cross-cultural communication cannot be taught like a set of principles can, learners can develop greater sensitivity and awareness of the cross-cultural problems that can exist in any interaction in an EIL context.

This can be approached by developing in learners a conscious awareness of the force and effect of what they are saying on the listener. This awareness has been

described as developing a students' "metapragmatic ability - the ability to analyse language use in a conscious manner." (Thomas: 1983, p.98) In a similar vein, the Industrial Language Training Service "developed an approach ... upon developing real awareness of the impact of what you are saying on the other person, and upon developing communication skills in demanding and stressful situations." (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.8)

This can be ideally done through video, by portraying instances of miscommunication and successful communication, the detailed analysis of which, enables learners to find out what went wrong and to work out steps that can be taken to overcome similar problems in the future.

Although there is no neat formula for teaching cross-cultural communication skills, there are steps which are suggested for better inter-ethnic communication to take place, from which parallels can be drawn. As it is suggested, individuals can,

"first of all, learn how to analyse their own language behaviour. Secondly, they can learn how their English differs systematically from the English spoken by a different cultural group. Thirdly, they

can begin the process of sharpening their own perception of what may go wrong. Finally, they can recognise the need for talking with the other person about what has gone wrong when there is a communication breakdown. In short, a new understanding of how people communicate provides a tool for learning how to do it yourself." (Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts: 1979, p.33)

II.8.ii Lessons to be Learnt from 'Language and Cross-Cultural Management Training Project'

Another project which has direct relevance for the field of language and cross-cultural communication is the "Language and Cross-Cultural Management Training Project". (Baxter: 1983) Although this specifically involved Japanese and American managers, the approach adopted in carrying out the training enables it to have potential for the field of EIL and cross-cultural communication which has coping with principles of diversity and adaptability as its basis.

An integral part of the training was that of "mapping miscommunication". "A basic principle was that incidents of miscommunication are opportunities for culture learning. Through systematic reflection on actual

miscommunication which one has experienced, one can gain insight into the process of communication and into the influence of culture on that process." (Baxter: 1983, p.317) To provide a detailed picture of the practical approach utilised, the part of the English for Intercultural Communication training that was summarised in checklist form will be partially listed below:

English for Intercultural Communication: Mapping
Miscommunication

If you were unable to reach understanding, what happened?
If the communication created discomfort for you, why?
What can you do to reach understanding?

- () ROLES: Our role relationship wasn't clear.
- () GOALS: We were trying to reach different communication goals.
- () PROCEDURE: The procedure (meeting, interview, "brainstorming" etc.) was not mutually shared.
- () ORAL COMMUNICATION: Aspects of spoken English (oral delivery, information structure, use of silence etc.) interfered with communication.
- () INFERENCE: One or both of us inferred something which

was not intended; inferences were not checked.

() NONVERBAL: Nonverbal communication was not monitored; or nonverbal messages said more than was intended.

(Baxter: 1983, p.317 & 318)

The suggestions for the practical implementation of the above recommendations brings into focus the portrayal of instances of miscommunication and successful communication, the detailed analysis of which, would enable learners to find out what went wrong and to work out steps that can be taken to overcome similar problems in the future. This portrayal of various communicative interactions inevitably draws into the picture the medium that can best deal with the above 'message.' This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, Section III.4.

Given the fact that English is an international language, enabling persons from various parts of the globe, who possess different sociocultural backgrounds, to interact with each other, there should be the production of teaching materials which will enable learners to acquire a sociocultural awareness and to equip them with interactive skills that would place them in a better position to be

able to overcome these potential communicative problems.

Presently, most of the interpersonal cross-cultural skills are only introduced through a particular methodology in the field of intercultural training for fluent speakers of the language. These are persons who will be sent to various other countries and would therefore have immediate occasion to require cross-cultural interpersonal skills. There should be no reason why these skills should not be introduced to learners, for example, at tertiary-level institutions in Malaysia, who have been taught the linguistic and communicative aspects of spoken language all through their school education. Unfortunately, on entering the Universities, their mastery of the language still needs improvement. Rather, than solely subject learners to the similar approach adopted in schools, which usually concentrates on linguistic and sociolinguistic factors in interaction, with careful planning, it should be possible to also enable learners to be made aware of the appropriate sociocultural skills which will enable more effective communication to take place.

II.9 Learners' Personal Development

The above suggestion ties in with the recommendations that language teaching should extend beyond the teaching of the

linguistic and the paralinguistic code and be more concerned with the learners' personal development in acquiring the knowledge and awareness of cross-cultural communication skills. The necessity of implementing this is expressed succinctly by Rivers in the American context, which has a similar international application.

She says,

"Two divergent trends are becoming very evident on the national and international scene: interdependence and assertion of identity. Both are potential sources of tension and conflict ... In our educational institutions, we must prepare students for concord and productive living in a world where these two forces are determining the social and political environment in which they live and work Essential to harmonious living in such a world will be the ability to comprehend others ... Our citizens must learn to live with such diversity."
(Rivers: 1981)

This raises a criticism levelled at ELT video material- the focus is on the presentation of linguistic interactions in a sociolinguistic context. There is no attempt to introduce in addition to the above, some aspects that would expose the learner to a wider

perspective of life that would facilitate a learners' educational development.

"Very frequently, language teaching materials fail to emphasise educational goals at all. Targets are established externally to learners, in content terms usually defined as the mastery of particular linguistic items in some pre-set sequence. Little reference at all is made to the place of such materials in the general educational development of the pupil or the student." (Candlin and Edelhoff: 1982, p.xi)

On the other hand, a focus on the learners' personal development could lead to a broadening of one's outlook and the growth of a tolerance towards the differences in the sociocultural norms of other sociocultural groups. As Brumfit says, language teaching "must see itself as an educational, not merely a technical tool." (Brumfit: 1978, p.95) Xiaoju in writing about the Chinese experience in adopting the communicative approach says,

"We believe that in every learner there is potential to be developed, ... We consider that a foreign language course has failed if a learner coming through it has gained nothing beyond the language, or

in other words, has not become a fuller person who can play a really useful role in international communication between cultures, which of course goes far beyond mere linguistic exchange." (Xiaoju: 1984, p.11)

Learning about and interacting with other cultures does not mean that one changes oneself and thus loses one's own cultural identity. Smith's advice is apt in this instance, when he reminds us that in interactions with persons of different sociocultural backgrounds, whether Singaporean, Filipinos, Thais, Americans or British, interlocuters should remember that,

"Although they will want to know a great deal about other people and other cultures, they should remember that they can only be themselves. English is a means to communicate with the rest of the world their identity, culture, politics, religion and 'way of life'. One doesn't need to become more Western or change one's morals to use English well in international situations. English can and should be denationalized." (Smith: 1983, p.9)

Mahatma Gandhi, the wise philosopher of India, succinctly expresses the philosophy that encompasses the essence of

the above arguments when he says,

"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." (Levine and Adelman: 1982)

Therefore through the teaching of EIL, one can improve not just the linguistic skills of the learners but just as beneficially the cultural skills thus enabling them to possess intercultural communication skills. In the long run, acquiring language skills as well as general awareness skills will benefit the learner not only personally but also professionally because,

"employment opportunities abound in the area of intercultural communication ... the ability to exchange precise, sometimes culture-specific ideas and meanings with people of other cultures, ... greatly enhances the value to employers of people with specific training in such fields as computer technology, business administration, public administration, economics, education and the like." (Samovar, L.A. et al: 1981, p.9)

Thus the learners benefit not only themselves but also the community.

II.10 Conclusion

There are aspects of the spoken language that can be taught and which can be learnt by the language learner. These are the grammatical, lexical, phonological and some sociolinguistic components. On the other hand there are aspects which cannot be taught and consciously learnt but which learners, through the process of analysis can be made aware of and sensitised to. These are aspects which could be concretised through the production of materials.

Therefore materials should cover interactions taking place in a particular context, which would involve the language and wider sociolinguistic aspects. In addition, the materials should be so designed to enable the following to be presented and analysed facilitating greater knowledge and awareness of:

- i. the function and meaning of non-verbal language used in an interaction;
- ii. understanding differing norms of social behaviour: different discourse strategies, speech acts used by

different groups of speakers;

iii. management of interactions - agenda management and turn-taking;

iv. the communication strategies used by interactors which help facilitate communication;

v. general intercultural awareness skills involved in cross-cultural interactions;

vi. reasons for the breakdown / success of the communication process.

Given that spoken communicative competence incorporates an awareness of the various aspects, which can gradually be incorporated into the learner's repertoire, it is unfortunate that these issues have not been dealt with in language teaching materials. It could be speculated that one of the reasons for this is the difficulty of portraying these 'problematic' situations via text or audio-cassettes because so much of their effectiveness in portrayal hinges on the visual.

A solution to this, as suggested earlier, could be the use of video, which given its characteristics enable it to

portray the verbal as well as the non-verbal features of communication in either successful or unsuccessful instances of communication. This then takes us onto the next chapter which explores the role of video in the teaching of communicative competence in an EIL context.

Chapter Three: The Strengths and Weaknesses of Video for EIL

III.1 Introduction

The mistaken impression that theses which advocate the role of a particular medium for language teaching could give seems to be an all-consuming argument for the particular medium to the exclusion of all else.

Therefore, at the outset, in this thesis, it would be relevant to emphasise that the discussion of the use of video for EIL teaching is not to argue a case for it to the exclusion of all else but to work out a case for its use for teaching aspects of EIL the medium is most suited for. Therefore, this discussion will be conducted in comparison with other audio-visual aids leading to a delineation of certain roles the video medium is especially suited for in teaching aspects of English as an International language.

III.2 Important Considerations in the Selection of a Medium for Pedagogic Purposes

The act of selection of a medium or media of instruction is not a simple matter. As Schramm explains, it,

" ... is not like an engineering handbook for a field strength formula, nor in a road atlas for the most direct route. To the extent that selection is a rational act, the decision maker is likely to have to consider a skein of complex information. His search for that information will lead him within the media to the message. It will lead him to consider carefully the needs and abilities of the students he wants to teach, the precise nature of the learning events he wants to bring about, and the media coding system most likely to bring them about." (Schramm: 1977, p.24)

Thus, it is important that in this research, the selection of video for teaching cross-cultural communication takes into consideration the needs of language learners at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, which in this context is the learning of English as an International language and consequently developing cross-cultural skills. Having worked out in Chapter Two, the pedagogical requirements of cross-cultural communication, it is now important to be well-versed with the characteristics of the selected medium that can best be utilised for the teaching and learning of cross-cultural communication in an EIL context. Briefly stated, for video to be effectively applied in the teaching contexts, the medium should be

suitably and thoughtfully married to the message and vice-versa.

Sherrington draws together the two strands of the medium and the message into an integrated system when he says,

"In a correctly balanced teaching system, Each technological resource will be used only when it has a unique contribution to make to the learning process Most important, the technology will no longer be isolated, having to justify its use on its own merits; it will interlock with educational criteria and demands at each stage, and justify itself by the part it can play in a total teaching system."
(Sherrington: 1973, p.11)

It is crucial that this is borne in mind in the use of various media for language teaching. If it is not then the unfortunate disillusionment which arose with the language laboratory could end up being a natural reaction to most other media.

The language laboratory attained fame with the audiolingual method in the 1950's. The language laboratory allowed the learner, to repeat after an accurate model on the tape focussing on exercises on

language structure. As was discussed in the previous chapter, based on the audio-lingual method, learners were encouraged to focus on accuracy and fluency in mastering the structures of the language. This excessive focus on structure gradually led to dissatisfaction in the late 60's and early 70's with the structure-focussed language teaching theories which enabled the learners to know the language but not to apply it communicatively. In parallel, this resulted in the gradual disenchantment with the language laboratory, which had been used mainly for structural practise to the exclusion of all else.

This misuse of the language laboratory is not the fault of the medium but of the users who place too much of the teaching load on it and whose expectations are consequently unrealistic. Rivers appropriately advises the users, when she says,

"Just as the language laboratory is not in itself a method, neither is it a teacher. It will not do the teachers' work for him, nor even reduce the amount of work he is called upon to do. It will relieve him, of the direction of a great deal of repetitive practice which is so valuable to the student and so wearying to the teacher." (Rivers: 1968, p.319)

If the advice is not heeded and "the technology has frequently been called upon to play a greater part in the teaching system than it can naturally handle, in order to demonstrate and sell its capabilities" (Sherrington: 1973, p.10), it is only a matter of time before disillusionment sets in and the particular medium is relegated to the position of a 'white elephant' forever to be stored away in some dusty cupboard!

On the other hand, if greater thought and care has been given to the process of selection of the appropriate medium to be used for a particular teaching purpose, then this medium could attribute to better and more productive teaching conditions for the learners.

Thus, in discussing the role of video for the teaching of EIL, it is crucial that this research seeks to address what it is in its characteristics that enable video to play a crucial role in developing cross cultural communicative skills for language learners of English as an International language? Has it got a role for portraying all aspects of language teaching?

To provide comparable information which will help illuminate the particular features of the medium of video, the next section will include a brief analysis of the characteristics of other media as well.

III.3 Characteristics of the Medium of Video

III.3.i Symbolic Representations of Media

Salomon (1979) argues very strongly for looking at various media in terms of the "specific, critical qualities" they possess - that is, the symbol systems that each medium possesses that may be present across various media or may be peculiar to a particular medium only. Symbol systems are summarised as:

".... a set of elements, such as words, numbers, shapes or musical scores, that are inter-related within each system by syntactic rules or conventions. Some systems are more 'notational' (e.g. musical scores, mathematical symbols) because they entail discrete and unambiguous elements which can be organised in lawful ways. Other systems are 'non-notational' (e.g. pictures), and are both syntactically and semantically 'dense', in that they are much more open to interpretation, since there is no unambiguous relationship between the symbol (picture) and what it represents." (Bates: 1981, p.84)

A distinction is made between three different kinds of

symbol systems:

"Digital (or notational) systems where meaning is conveyed by written language, musical notation, mathematical symbols. Analogic systems made up of continuous elements which nevertheless have recognised meaning and forms. Examples would be voice quality, performed music, dance. Iconic systems which use pictorial representation, with a variety of possible visual experiences and meanings."
(Bates: 1981, p.84)

Various media possess singly or in combination symbolic systems which "differ with respect to" the kinds of information they "are best suited to convey." (Meringoff: 1980, p.240)

The main distinction between television, on the one hand, and print or lecturing, on the other, is that television can combine all three symbolic systems. Print (without illustrations) uses digital codes only and, even with illustrations, does not include analogic codes. Speech contains digital and analogic codes, but is not iconic. The iconic category is further distinguished into static (for fixed illustrations) and dynamic (for moving pictures, as in television) symbol systems.

Symbolic Representations of Media

Media	Codes -	Digital	Analogic	Iconic	
				Static	Dynamic
Print		/			
Print (with illustrations)		/		/	
Audio-cassettes		/	/		
Television / Video		/	/	/	/
Computers		/	/	/	

From the above diagram, it can be seen that video possesses the richest mode of representation - digital, analogic and iconic (both static and dynamic). The two arguments which could be raised against this are:

- i. if print (with illustrations) (digital and iconic) and audio-cassettes (analogic) were to be combined for pedagogical use, then we would get as rich a representation as video.
- ii. computers possess as rich a representation of the various symbolic modes - digital, analogic and iconic representation.

What then would be the difference between the above two and video? This lies in the iconic mode of representation

which has been subdivided into static and dynamic representations. The iconic mode of representation in illustrations and the computer is static. Illustrations and computers lack the ability to "synchronise natural voice with full moving pictures" simultaneously. On the other hand, video possesses a rich symbolic code. With its digital, analogic and dynamic iconic representation, it is able to simulate real-life activities in communicative contexts by synchronising natural and life-like representations with natural speech of people interacting in their everyday activities. It is the possession of this capability which distinguishes it from the other media. This is reflected in a use that has been made of video as compared to other media in the language field,

"Most language courses use dialogue or a narrative to present the language of the unit. We use examples in the textbook, and often on audio, which gives them the greater realism of different voices and sound effects. When, with video, we can add moving pictures to the soundtrack, the examples of language in use becomes even more realistic. These examples are more comprehensive too, because they put before us the ways people communicate visually as well as verbally. So video is a good means of bringing

'slices of living language' into the classroom."
(Allan: 1985, p.48)

In emphasising the beneficial qualities of the medium, one is not recommending its use to the exclusion of all else. This would be condemning it to the same fate that has befallen the language laboratory. In addition, the nature of the medium of video with its ability to simulate real-life interaction in context should not lead to an over-emphasis on the context to the detriment of the form. This can be a potential danger, given the ability of video to contextualise real-life interactions which seems to be a dominant need in communicative language teaching. There should be the planned utilisation of the appropriate medium for different language teaching and learning tasks. In the planned utilisation of the medium, it is important as mentioned earlier, to be thorough with its characteristics, part of which has been worked out in this section.

Thus the capabilities of the medium are borne by its forms and technology. To further establish the value of the presentational characteristics of the television medium for language teaching, research which has been carried out on the specific qualities of the various media and their contribution to learning in general will be referred to.

This incorporates recent media research which has moved away from "gross media comparisons" and focussed instead "upon specific attributes whose instructional potentialities were investigated." (Salomon and Clark: 1977; p.103)

III.3.ii More Recent Research on Instructional Television

A number of experiments were carried out to compare the specific attributes of television/film - that is visuals in motion as compared to the attributes of radio - the audio mode (which are equivalent to audio-cassettes) and their contribution to learning tested by certain specific tasks.

Most of these research studies have concentrated on children and their viewing habits. One of the reasons for this presumably, is because a large part of the child's waking time is spent viewing television. In addition, children have not yet achieved full cognitive development and therefore the television with its different technological modes of presentation may make extra demands on their capabilities when they have to cope with both the visual and audio mode simultaneously.

Most of the results found that when listening to a story

on the audio mode (radio), (analogic mode), children tended to perform better on tests that required "recognition of expressive language and inferences drawn from verbal content." On the other hand, when viewing the story over the visual mode, (iconic mode) it was found that "a television presentation augmented knowledge of audiovisual story details, picture sequencing ability and inferences based on actions." (Beagles-Roos and Gats: 1983, p.135)

Children thus seem better able to utilise the different modes separately - acquiring the tasks that the medium themselves seem best able to present - the audio mode with its analogic symbol system and the iconic mode with its iconic symbol system. The concentration on the analogic system, without the distraction of the iconic mode, seems to have enabled them to concentrate on the verbal language.

On the other hand, a research study which focused on adults and dealt with two symbolic systems distinctly warrants mention. This was the comparison of text story comprising the digital code, with the movie, "The Red Balloon", without dialogue comprising only the iconic mode. Before the recall questions were given to the respondents, the two mediums were judged by the

respondents to be structurally equivalent.

This study proved that the recall ability of subjects who studied the structurally equivalent movie and text stories were very similar. These results indicate that story processing at the adult level is not dependent on the input medium as it is for children.

The especially interesting turn of events occurred after a 7-day break, when the same tests were given to the subjects. It was found that text subjects not only were significantly worse at statements of structure than were movie subjects but also made 16% more incorrect statements than did movie subjects. Specificity of information thus appears better at the time of study for text subjects. But the information encoded at the time of study, regarding both structure and detail, seem to be better retained over a week for movie than for text subjects. (Baggett: 1979, p.353)

The above results seem to indicate that the advantage of presenting visual images facilitates the comprehension and absorption of information via television. This can be advantageous for the teaching of verbal communication because in face-to-face interaction, the verbal channel is only part of the total communicative effect. Equally

important in channeling the messages of communication are the non-verbal paralinguistic components, which are made up, amongst other aspects, of facial expressions and gestures. Thus the communicative event which is made up of dual channels - the verbal and non-verbal is suitably aligned with the representational modes of television which is also dual channelled - the visual and the audio channel. This would make television a natural medium for presenting the total communicative event and aiding absorption of information.

A cautionary note should be made here that even though the medium possesses presentational advantages, this does not automatically mean that the language learner benefits from them. It is in the careful design of the materials that ensure active viewing, that is, active processing of information, that the advantages of the medium are exploited to facilitate the learning process. (This issue will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four)

Having argued that it is television and its qualities that best serve the needs of presenting pertinent aspects of intercultural communication, it is necessary now to explore the ways in which video/television's main advantage - its presentational characteristic - has been exploited in other subject areas. This will be done in

parallel with the exploitation of this characteristic in the language teaching field - that is to investigate in this instance, aspects of oral communicative competence that can best be facilitated by the medium. Briefly stated, for media to be effectively applied in the teaching contexts, the medium should be suitably and thoughtfully married to the message and vice-versa.

Sherrington draws together the two strands of the medium and the message into an integrated system when he says,

"In a correctly balanced teaching system, Each technological resource will be used only when it has a unique contribution to make to the learning process ...Most important, the technology will no longer be isolated, having to justify its use on its own merits; it will interlock with educational criteria and demands at each stage, and justify itself by the part it can play in a total teaching system."
(Sherrington: 1973, p.11)

Thus for the medium to play a constructive instructional role, it is important to further determine the advantages of the presentational characteristics. These then need to be linked to the learning process of the viewer, that is, to "identify and discuss some of the unique ways in which

... television as a medium communicates and develops learning and thinking." (Bates: 1987, p.36) Only after this is established, can the possession of these features be a potential instructional advantage for the particular medium.

III.4 Advantages of the Presentational Characteristic of Video for Language Teaching

III.4.i Parallel between the Open University Experience and Language Teaching Needs

The Open University is an institution which has a reputable tradition for using multi-media systems for instructional purposes. Particular components of courses have been dealt with via television because of the specific attributes television possesses and their appropriate link with the nature of the learning task. In fact, in allocating the budget for the use of television for particular instructional purposes, a number of criteria have been drawn up based on the media research group's experience as well as research carried out over the years. These criteria are based on the specific attributes of the particular medium of television and how best it meets the needs of the message which needs to be instructed.

There are particularly three criteria which tie in with the needs of teaching spoken components of EIL. The first of these is one which is possible due to the presentational advantages of television.

III.4.1.a Presentational Advantages

As Greenfield says,

"The fact that television's images are both visual and moving makes it particularly well suited to present two particular kinds of content: information about dynamic processes of action and transformation, and information about space." (Greenfield: 1984, p.22)

This enables it to be a medium that is suitable for the teaching of physical and manual skills and to portray dynamic movement. In line with this, the criteria suggested in the Open University context is,

"To bring to students primary resource material, or case-study material, i.e. films or recordings of naturally occurring events, which through editing and selection demonstrate or illustrate principles covered in the units." (Bates: 1984, p.246)

Parallel to the above use, the language teaching field has taken advantage of video's dual-channelled presentational advantage by producing materials which are able to simulate real-life communication. This is advantageous because teaching the language is not just teaching the verbal mode out of context but in context. This enables the sociolinguistic components of participants, settings and the nature of the interaction to be encompassed in a wider context. In addition, video can be utilised to focus on more detailed aspects of language - both the linguistic and paralinguistic features. An awareness and accomodation of these features play an important role in determining the success or failure of cross-cultural communicative interactions. Thus, the video is ideal in its capability in being able to present the wider context - holistic perspectives as well as specific components of interaction - the particularistic perspectives, which will be discussed further in the next section.

This will provide the learner with the opportunity of seeing a close simulation of a real life interaction. The presentation of and exposure to these interactions are only part of the language learning process. When the learner is taught the structural forms of the language, he/she will at least have an idea of how they have been used in an interaction. The section on 'More Recent

Research on Instructional Media', presented research results which suggested that being able to see language being used simultaneously in the dynamic visual mode facilitates the learner remembering the use of the language when the need arises. As Criper and Widdowson say, "contextual language teaching may serve as a valuable basis for the later development of communicative competence." (Criper and Widdowson: 1975, p.210)

It must be mentioned at this point, that the possession of the presentational characteristics, though important, will not by themselves contribute efficiently to the processing of information and thus the learning process. Of equal importance is the manner in which the material are exploited. For example, this can be carried out by utilising the various features on the video recorder to break a sequence up into pedagogically efficient sequences which allows the teacher/learner to focus on a broad sociocultural setting or a culture-specific mode of behaviour. The next criteria focuses on the exploitation of the medium for specifically cross-cultural communicative pedagogical purposes.

III.4.1.b Analysis of Cross-cultural Communication

This criteria provides the methodology for handling the need to heighten the cross-cultural awareness of learners by providing extracts which,

"encourage students to analyse for themselves how the (participants) handled the situation, and what they themselves might do in similar circumstances. This extract provided an opportunity for students to make their own interpretations, and to develop skills of analysis and application of principles taught elsewhere in the course." (Bates: 1987, p.8)

This criteria would fit in with the components of spoken language which cannot be consciously taught and ingrained in the learner but which through the process of analysis, the learner can be sensitised to and made aware of. Equipped with this knowledge and awareness, learners could face cross-cultural interactions with greater confidence.

This advantage of video to enable analysis of cross-cultural interactors is succinctly expressed by Baxter and Levine in their review of 'Crosstalk', which covers instances of inter-ethnic communicative difficulties. They inform that,

"Crosstalk analyzes the discourse produced through the interaction of individuals who speak English in different ways. A teaching methodology can be derived from this type of analysis of intercultural interaction. A teacher, most effectively through video, can give learners an awareness of and practice in intercultural communication. (my underlining)

Using a video tape, showing instances of miscommunication, the teacher can play the tape scene by scene. He or she can then stop the tape when miscommunication occurs and work with students to identify possible sources of the ineffective communication and to find more effective alternatives." (Baxter and Levine: 1982, p.251)

This will be advantageous in the EIL context because to equip learners with the strategies and confidence to cope with cross-cultural communication, they should be presented with various types of interactions involving persons from varying cross-cultural backgrounds. By viewing the interaction holistically, learners are provided with the opportunity to focus on the participants in a wider sociocultural context and by focusing on the particular, learners have the opportunity of observing and understanding the specific features of cross-cultural behaviour that contribute or impede the interactive

processes.

In addition to the above mentioned presentational characteristics of television are further advantages of the medium which stem from its rich symbolic system. These relate to the medium being able to exemplify and simplify higher level cognitive demands made on the learner.

III.4.i.c Ability to Concretise Abstract Principles

Television may not be ideal for presenting abstract principles and ideas in themselves but its rich symbolic codes are ideal for providing "... a concrete example of an abstract principle or generalization." (Bates: 1987; p.5)

This ties in with the need to build up in learners an awareness of intercultural communication skills. In the teaching of these skills, it is abstract concepts such as tolerance, politeness and open-mindedness that need to be encouraged in the language learners. These abstract concepts can be concretised in specific situations which reflect instances of either miscommunication or successful communication in varying sociocultural contexts. It is difficult to present abstract concepts in the written word

without providing some form of visualisation. This difficulty can be overcome via the use of appropriate video material.

Even though video is ideal for presenting instances of successful as well as problematic interactions in various sociocultural contexts, it must be borne in mind that when learners view the interactions, it is only part of the learning process. The other part that facilitates the learning process is the exploitation of the video materials by the teacher. Given these two perspectives to the role of video for language teaching, it is important to expand on their roles in this research.

III.5 Focus on the Presentational Characteristics of Video in this Research

In this research, the focus will be on ELT video materials which have exploited the advantages of the presentational characteristics of the medium. This is not because the pedagogical exploitation is not considered important, but as stated at the beginning of this research, it is essential to firstly investigate the appropriacy of the sociocultural and design features of the materials, given that they are used in a situation where the expectations and needs of the learners may be different from that of

the underlying assumptions held by producers of the existing ELT video materials.

Here is where this research differs most from that of the strongly-held opinion of a number of established video practitioners, who at a Video Colloquim (1983) said,

"Looking at video text in isolation from the learning process in which it is deployed was felt by many to be unprofitable. As one participant remarked: 'The materials are not good or bad in themselves, it depends on how they are exploited.'" (Jones and Mackiewicz: 1983, p.5)

It must be remembered though that these participants on the whole, were looking at the video materials in the European context. Therefore, in that context the sociocultural implications of the materials do not play as important a role as they would given a learning environment which is socioculturally different.

Therefore, in this research the focus will be on the critical analysis of the video materials which will be dealt with in the following chapter. Since the exploitation of the materials is equally important, it is only appropriate that it be dealt with to some extent at

this point.

Greenfield appropriately emphasises the necessity of the interactive link between the viewer and the material. She says,

" ... it is the social context and use of a medium that determine the medium's impact on ways of thinking ... Like print, television and film are not substitutes for human interaction, but must be combined with and enhanced by it." (Greenfield: 1984, p.84)

Greenfield is discussing these issues in the home viewing environment where the parent would act as the interactive link between the viewer (the child) and the television programme. A parallel link can be made in the teaching and learning environment between the teacher, the learner and the materials.

III.6 Pedagogical Exploitation of Video

When video is used in the classroom, it is the teacher who acts as the active link between the materials and the learner. The teacher's role is facilitated by the technological characteristics of the particular medium.

This then takes us into a discussion of the technological advantages and disadvantages of video and how best they could be exploited for pedagogical purposes to facilitate interaction between the learner and the material.

III.6.i Technological Advantages of Video

The video cassette is a technological advancement over television and possesses greater advantages in the form of flexible control characteristics. These advantages potentially allow for greater control over the material in the form of various tasks and techniques in the classroom. This is possible through the possession of the following features.

All video recorders are equipped with a stop/start button and a rewind and forward wind facility. In addition it is essential that any VCR that is to be used in the language classroom should, as far as possible, possess the following three features:

- (1) Hold-frame facility / Freeze-frame facility / Still-frame facility,
- (2) Speed search facility / Fast-picture search, shuttle search, cue and review
- (3) Remote control handset

(1) Hold-frame facility

This can be used for the following activities:

- a. Prediction of language used in the frozen sequence or language that will be used or action that will occur after the frozen sequence.

Example:

"What do you think they are saying to each other?"

"What do you think he will do and say next?"

- b. Discussion of the setting - where is it taking place, who are the people involved?

What kind of facial expressions do they have? Why do you think so?

- c. Analysis of paralinguistic features - facial expressions, proxemics, etc.

- d. Analysis of possible sources of miscommunication, via comparison of attitudes and social behaviour of interlocutors who belong to different sociocultural groups.

(2) Speed Search Facility

This feature allows one to speed through the tape forward and backward at between five and ten times normal playback speed. The picture remains on the screen while this is

taking place and thus this is an extremely helpful facility in locating a point quickly and accurately on the tape.

(3) Remote Control Handset

This allows one to control the video from anywhere in the classroom and is especially useful for groupwork. It saves the teacher having to go back to the video to handle the controls.

(Gill: 1984, p.16)

In spite of the above suggestions which encourage greater interactions in the class between the learners and the material, one wonders whether teachers do make use of them as recommended? It is not within the scope of this research to investigate this but it may not be entirely surprising to discover that video materials are often played through without the use of the control characteristics.

III.6.1i Lack of Application of Technological Advantages

MacKnight (1983) in researching on video use in institutions in the U.K discovered that,

"Introductory and follow up activities are sometimes more wishful thinking than always systematically carried out, but everyone is aware of the need for support material. Doubts are candidly expressed about the pious hope that students will learn something merely by watching video." (MacKnight: 1983, p.8)

Similarly, Bourne's research (1985) reinforces MacKnight's (1983) findings. Bourne's results confirm,

"the impression that viewing the video as a whole was common practice, and that teachers expected the programme to stand up as a learning experience on its own, rather than seeing it as a basic resource to draw on." (Bourne: 1985, p.33)

In addition, research at the Open University has found that students and even teachers who make use of recorded broadcast television do not make use of the stop/start, hold-facility devices while watching a broadcast on video. (Bates: 1987, p.12)

There could be a number of possible reasons for this:

a. Lack of systematic training in video exploitation.

This is supported by MacKnight's research which found that, "Systematic training in the construction and exploitation of video material is very rare. ... Teacher training is not used as a means of promoting more efficient video use ..." (MacKnight: 1983, p.15)

b. Weakness in the technology itself

It must be mentioned that in spite of the existing control characteristics of VCRs, there are certain weaknesses in the technological qualities, which do not facilitate some of the above suggestions to be carried out as effectively as they could be. These weaknesses are the lack of:

- i. a stable freeze frame which conserved picture quality
- ii. an instant sound only quality (MacWilliam: 1987, p.13)

In certain instances, depending on the quality of the video cassette recorder being used, the technological quality of the freeze-frame feature varies. When technology is not as efficient as it should be and a number of activities depend on it, then this can only lead to disappointment on the part of the user - both the

teacher and the learner, and could result in the suggested techniques being used less and less.

c. Over-kill of 'Button-Pushing' Technique

In addition, MacWilliam criticises the "methodology which has developed around classroom video use which has given such prominence to its 'button-pushing' potential'." This criticism is harsh in certain respects because as was discussed earlier, there are occasions when it is advantageous to use the button-pushing technique to enable learners to focus and observe particular language and behavioural characteristics.

On the other hand, the criticism is partially justified because this is the only way (given the present video materials that we have) in which learners are encouraged to focus on any aspect of the video materials as there are no devices in the materials themselves that encourage active viewing between the learner and the materials, without the teacher having to resort to the 'pause button.' This is because most of the existing ELT video materials are based on the design of general broadcasting programmes. This will be dealt with in greater detail in the next chapter.

III.6.iii Provision of Classroom Activities

It must not be forgotten that video is a means to an end, facilitating the language learning process. Therefore, provision should always be provided for the learner to try out what he has been taught or made aware of, through role-plays, simulations, analysis, discussions and group-work. As Willis aptly reminds us,

"Video, even unscripted and unedited video, is not 'real life'; watching and analysing an interaction on video is useful, but students still need to practice doing things for themselves after viewing. As observers, they may gain receptive skills but only as active participants will they gain productive skills. Video is a means to an end, not an end in itself." (Willis: 1983, p.41)

III.7 Conclusion

Video, with its technological and presentational advantages enables it to be a medium that can play a valuable role in the domain of cross-cultural communication. Having briefly dealt with the exploitation of the medium in the classroom, it is opportune to move onto the practical focus of this research, which is to

investigate the social and design appropriateness of ELT video materials for language learners of English as an International language.

To enable the critical analysis to be carried out, evaluative criteria will be drawn up based on the content and design factors which are pertinent to and embedded in the field of the role of video for developing cross-cultural communication in an EIL context. It is in terms of these evaluative criteria that the critical analysis to assess the appropriateness of the existing ELT video materials will be carried out.

Chapter Four: The Sociocultural and Design Criteria for Evaluating the Appropriateness of ELT Video Materials

IV.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a case was argued for the advantageous presentational characteristics of video, especially in portraying the communicative event with all its sociocultural elements, in both successful and unsuccessful instances of communication. But it is essential to emphasise that a medium can only be as advantageous as the materials that are used with it. No matter how beneficial the qualities of the medium itself, it will all come to naught if the materials used with it, do not match the needs of the language learners. For the materials to be meaningful and pedagogically effective, the content and design of the video materials should be closely linked to the social, cultural and educational context in which English is to be used by Malaysian language learners.

Given this, an evaluation of the appropriateness of ELT video materials, which to date, are produced mainly in native-speaker contexts and used in socioculturally different contexts in various parts of the world, should

be conducted from a dual perspective to investigate:

- i. the appropriateness of the sociocultural content of existing ELT video materials. Given the role and function of English in Malaysia, do the learners find the existing sociocultural features satisfactory and appropriate? If they do not, then the research will seek to find out which sociocultural features would be more suitable given the international role of English.
- ii. the effectiveness of the design of ELT video materials. For pedagogical effectiveness, the basic underlying principle on which these design features should be based is that of encouraging active viewing.

Both the content and design criteria form the crux of the investigation and form the basis of the research methods used to investigate the appropriateness of the ELT video materials.

IV.2 Research Methods Used to Evaluate the Content and Design Appropriateness of ELT Video Materials

The research methods used to carry out this evaluation of the existing ELT video materials are two-pronged in approach.

They are firstly, via a critical analysis of the existing materials based on the content and design criteria and secondly via the use of questionnaires which enables the attitudes and reactions of the learners to the various sociocultural issues to be drawn into the research.

The aim of the critical analysis of the existing materials is to discover both the advantages and weaknesses of the sociocultural content and design features of the existing materials. The information from the analysis will have valuable implications for the production of future video materials. The advantages can be incorporated and the weaknesses can be modified to enable future video materials to be meaningful and pedagogically effective for language learners of a particular region.

Apart from focusing on the materials itself, it is equally important to consider the attitudes and reactions of the language learners to the various sociocultural issues

involved. This will help in the decision-making involved in the production of future ELT video materials. This will be carried out through questionnaires. It must be mentioned at the outset that the focus of the questionnaires are the sociocultural content features and not the pedagogic design features because it is beyond the knowledge and realm of experience of the learners to react to issues regarding the design features of the video materials, as will be seen in the detailed discussion of the design criteria in Chapter Five.

The critical analysis which focuses on both the sociocultural content and design features will be carried out in Chapter Five, while the questionnaire research, which focuses on sociocultural content issues will be carried out in Chapter Six.

Before the practical aspects of information gathering via the critical analysis and questionnaires are carried out in Chapters Five and Six, it is crucial for this chapter to justify the inclusion of the various criteria to be used in both the research methods. This will be done by initially analysing the various general principles that underlie the production of video materials, and then gradually moving onto the more specific content and design issues that will function as the basis of the

criteria to be used in this research.

IV.3 General Principles Underlying the Production of Video Materials in an EIL Context

The two issues of direct importance - the sociocultural content and pedagogic design issues - stem from a consideration of the learner in a position of central importance in the context of English as an International language.

IV.3.i The Importance of Focusing on the Learner in Materials Development

I would like to begin this section with an obvious yet often over-looked statement that materials, when planned and designed, should consider the language learner at every stage of the process. The purpose in stating the obvious is to place the language learner in a central position and to draw into the discussion crucial factors of motivation and needs which affect the learners' relationship with the materials directly and which should underlie the development of materials for language teaching and learning, not only for the learner to gain in terms of knowledge but also to develop personally.

The language learners in Malaysia, as discussed in Chapter One, need English as a means of international communication - an essential means of communication between not only non-native speakers but also between non-native and native speakers of the language - persons who come from different sociocultural backgrounds. Given that these learners would have to communicate cross-culturally, they therefore need to possess not only knowledge of the basics of the language and their communicative utilisation but to build up an awareness of the cross-cultural variations that exist in speech behaviours which, the lack of sensitivity to, could pose problems in communication. This means not the mastering of the varying sociocultural behaviours of the different interactors (this would be impossible) but developing an awareness and gradually building up a sensitivity which would help in coping with variances in sociocultural behaviour. This would encourage the positive personal development of the learner. (This issue has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Section II.3) It is through the medium of video, with all its inherent qualities, that these educational perspectives could be incorporated into the design of video materials.

IV.3.ii Video Materials and the Learners' Personal Development

Video, as discussed in Chapter Three, possesses features that enable it to simulate real-life interactions in ways that no other medium is able to - to reiterate, it is able to capture the dynamics involved in any interaction of two persons meeting and communicating not only verbally but with gestures, facial expressions and many other ways. Given that video is such a rich medium, it would be under-utilised if it does not concern itself with more than teaching the language skills. It contains considerable educational potential in developing the learner as a person through extending the awareness of the learner to variances in sociocultural speech behaviours and thus developing in him qualities that enable him/her to adapt to the diversity that exists in cross-cultural communication.

The value of developing skills for cross-cultural communication is further advocated by Rivers. She is referring to the American context, but what she says has a valuable international application. She says,

"Two divergent trends are becoming very evident on the national and international scene: interdependence

and assertion of identity. Both are potential sources of tension and conflict In our educational institutions, we must prepare students for concord and productive living in a world where these two forces are determining the social and political environment in which they live and work ... Essential to harmonious living in such a world will be the ability to comprehend others ... Our citizens must learn to live with such diversity." (Rivers: 1981)

A focus on the learners' personal development could lead to the broadening of one's outlook and the growth of a tolerance towards the differences in the sociocultural norms of other sociocultural groups. As Brumfit says, language teaching "must see itself as an educational, not merely a technical tool." (Brumfit: 1978, p.23)

Candlin and Edelhoff support this by criticising language teaching materials on the whole. They say,

"Very frequently, language teaching materials fail to emphasise educational goals at all. Targets are established externally to learners, in content terms usually defined as the mastery of particular linguistic items in some pre-set sequence. Little

reference at all is made to the place of such materials in the general educational development of the pupil or the student." (Candlin and Edelhoff: 1982, p.xi)

Video materials should concern themselves with educating learners. In addition, it is also important for these materials to possess a basic underlying feature of motivating learners. We move now from educational purpose to pedagogic process.

IV.3.iv The Motivational Factor

If materials are to be motivating for language learners in Malaysia, they should possess instances of language use that will be in line with what the learners find interesting as well as relevant - interactions that they would be able to learn from and apply later when the need arises in similar sociocultural situations. This is supported by Cunningsworth who says,

"Motivation is a major factor in language-learning success. We should look for material that has variety and pace, is of genuine interest to the learners and contains learning activities that will appeal to them. Activities which encourage personal

involvement tend to increase motivation. The cultural standpoint of the course material is also important and should match as far as possible the objectives of the learner." (Cunningsworth: 1984, p.63)

To elaborate further, motivation is a key area of concern in the language teaching and learning literature and covers several factors. Generally, the factors that motivate language learners are classified as internal or external factors. (Cunningsworth: 1984, p.59) Internal factors are those related to the quality of the teaching materials and the quality of teaching, while external factors derive from social, economic or other factors.

Despite the fact that internal factors constitute both the quality of the teaching materials and the quality of teaching, for this research, it will be the former that will be focussed on. As explained at the end of Chapter Three, it is the quality of the ELT video materials used in the sociocultural frame of the use of English as an International language, that this research will be limited to. As quoted above, the cultural standpoint is an important consideration in the design of materials for the teaching of English for use as an international language. This is an area that has been under-researched in the past

and as elaborated further below, needs to be investigated to enable decisions to be made regarding the selection of appropriate sociocultural content in the design of video materials to be used by Malaysian learners who need English to communicate with peoples from varying sociocultural backgrounds.

IV.3.iv.a Motivation and Sociocultural Features

It is essential to focus on the motivational aspect of sociocultural features because the quality and nature of sociocultural features of the materials is one of the important factors in the language teaching and learning domain which play a part in either motivating or demotivating learners. This is supported by the criticism made by Cunningsworth in relation to language learning / teaching texts which are culture-specific, in this case, native-speaker culture-specific. He says,

"A limitation of the culture-specific coursebook is that it will only be of relevance to students who understand the cultural background in which it is set. European learners, for example, would readily comprehend most cultural settings in Britain or the U.S.A., but the same cannot be said of learners in Iraq, Thailand, the Sudan or China, where cultural

norms are vastly different. Indeed in these situations a strong portrayal of British life might well prove to be an impediment rather than a help to the learner. Unless the student is ultimately going to visit Britain or the U.S.A., the task of understanding and relating to the range of social situations portrayed in a culture-specific coursebook will be too great for any likely benefit accruing to justify it ...” (Cunningsworth: 1984, p.62)

This then again brings into prominence the issue of what sociocultural contexts future video materials for learners of English as an International language should be in. Ron White expresses the problem when he says,

“ ... we are moving into an era when we are becoming very conscious of the use of English as a language of wider communication internationally, where it’s no longer the property of the British or the Americans, but it’s contextualized in an international way. Until we can work out an adequate way of contextualizing English in a non-British or non-American way, I think we are stuck with the difficulty of cultural background ...” (White: 1983, p.240)

It is precisely this problem that this research seeks to investigate by the two-pronged approach of conducting a critical analysis of the existing video materials and quantitatively, through questionnaires, investigating learners' preferences and attitudes regarding the sociocultural content of existing and potential video materials in the context of English used as a means of international communication between peoples from varying sociocultural backgrounds.

In Chapter Two, it was argued that in spite of the adoption of a basic sociolinguistic approach to language teaching, there was a lack of incorporation of the sociocultural issues which stem from contexts in which English functions as an International language. Given the relative newness of the awareness and the pedagogical implications of the sociocultural issues in this field, it will be necessary for the countries concerned to research into these sociocultural issues to enable basic pedagogic decisions to be made for the design of socioculturally appropriate instructional materials for EIL learners.

This, as stated earlier, can be carried out by initially carrying out the critical analysis and later eliciting the attitudes and reactions of learners towards the sociocultural content of existing and potential video

materials via questionnaires.

The information from the research will help decide in which other ways English use can be contextualized, bearing in mind the international role of English for the Southeast Asian countries. Together with decisions regarding contextualisation will also naturally be decisions regarding the nature of the interactors and the settings, the speech variety to be spoken, the nature of the interactions and the speech behaviours to be focused on. These are the very components on which the sociocultural criteria used in the critical analysis are based. It is now timely to move onto a justification of the inclusion of the various sociocultural criteria in this research.

IV.4 Criteria for Evaluating Sociocultural Content

In language teaching video materials, it is the culture-general sociolinguistic components and their varying manifestations and applications in different sociocultural contexts that will function as the evaluative criteria for the sociocultural features of ELT video materials. As discussed in Chapter Two, the general parameters of sociolinguistic components are universal but it is the applications that vary across cultures. Video, with its

rich symbolic mode - digital, analogic and iconic - is able to capture realistic simulations of real-life interactions. This would consist of portraying the characters interacting with each other for various purposes in a particular sociocultural context. This would incorporate both the components in a wider context - the settings, the relationship between the interactors (the role-relationships) as well as the detailed aspects of the interaction focusing on the paralinguistic features - facial expressions, gestures, postures etc., tone of voice and register of language.

Therefore, in the critical analysis of a sequence of video material, the following sociocultural components and their culture-specific implementation should be evaluated to assess to what extent they reflect simulations of interactions that are both motivating and appropriate for language learners in an EIL context. These components make up the features that constitute the sociocultural framework of communicative interactions. This ties in directly with the sociocultural content that a producer of ELT video materials would have to consider in the Malaysian context and comprises:

- i. Nature of Participants and Sociocultural Settings
- ii. Speech Variety of Participants

iii. Nature of Non-verbal Paralinguistic Behaviour

iv. Nature of the Interaction

a. instances of successful communication which
function as role models of behaviour

b. instances of miscommunication stemming from:

- pragmalinguistic failure
- sociopragmatic failure
- personal differences
- events in the story-line

IV.4.i Nature of Participants and Sociocultural Settings

The nature of participants and the sociocultural settings are discussed together as they are closely linked to each other. These two features have been discussed in Chapter Two, Section II.2.ii, but will be summarised at this point to contextualise them in the evaluative criteria for the critical analysis.

English as an International language has resulted in participants from varying cross-cultural backgrounds interacting with each other in all kinds of situations, ranging from social to business environments. Therefore, the most important features of participants will be the sociological attributes, which comprise the participants'

status in society, professional roles as well as social roles. In cross-cultural settings, the distribution of cultural norms play an important part in determining the variances in power and social distance attributed to various role-relationships. This will determine, amongst other aspects, the nature of the formality/informality of the language to be used, the appropriate social behaviour to be adopted according to the power and role-relationship of the interactors. The different cross-cultural settings influence the nature of the topics, the functions and style of discourse and thus the nature of interactions, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Given that the nature of settings and participants provide the wider context for variations in cross-cultural communication essential for EIL learners, it is important to evaluate their nature in existing ELT video materials.

IV.4.11 Speech Variety of Participants

The next sociocultural feature of equal importance and especially needing consideration in the production of audio-visual teaching materials is the issue of the appropriateness and acceptability of the variety of English spoken by the participants. This is supported by Kachru who says,

" ... in language learning, it is not only appropriate but crucial to relate the model of language to the attitudes and reactions of the actual learners." (Kachru: 1979, p.6)

The existing video material produced in the United Kingdom largely consists of characters who are native speakers of the language, with the exception of the Sadrina Project (BBC). The latter is set in South East Asia and incorporates not only native speakers but also speakers from the various Asian countries, ranging from Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Given the international role of English, the ideal would be an investigation into learners' attitudes and reactions to the various speakers who speak varying varieties of English. But bearing in mind, practical considerations, it was thought prudent to focus on an investigation of learners' attitudes towards the varieties of English spoken by Malaysians. As discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.7, it is important to investigate students' and teachers' acceptance of the pedagogical model of Malaysian speakers of English for ELT video materials.

Given the multi-racial composition of its population, this focus by itself has a number of complex issues which need

to be considered.

Malaysia because of its colonial associations with the United Kingdom has traditionally adopted the British native-speaker as the pedagogical model of speech. But over the years, given the growing international role of English and the adoption of the language as a means of communication in the Malaysian context, there has developed a portion of the populace who speak various varieties of the language - the acrolect, the mesolect and the basilect. This has been discussed at length in Chapter One, Section 1.5. The issue therefore that arises in this context is which of these various speakers would be suitable as the pedagogical model of speech for use in language teaching video materials?

This issue is placed in a wider context by investigating, through the critical analysis of the video materials, the varieties of English spoken by the various participants, who are largely but not only limited to native speakers.

It is provided with a more specific focus by the practical investigation through questionnaires in Chapter Six, which elicits learners' attitudes and reactions to especially the educated Malaysian speakers of English, who possess varying ethnic accents. To provide a measure of direct

contrast, the learners' attitudes and reactions are also obtained toward the educated British speaker, with a standard and a local accent.

IV.4.iii Non-Verbal Paralinguistic Behaviour

This is an important aspect of communicative behaviour, especially in cross-cultural communication. This is because different communities adopt different norms in relation to certain aspects of non-verbal paralinguistic behaviour. Some of these non-verbal aspects are proximity, facial expressions, eye-contact and the use of gestures to denote different meanings, as well as the vocal elements like tone of voice, stress etc. For example, in the Middle Eastern cultures the distance at which interactors stand in relation to each other, is regarded as uncomfortably close by the Western communities. On the other hand, the latter's stance in communication is regarded as being too far, impersonal and detached by those who come from Middle Eastern cultures. This can lead to misunderstandings in communication.

Therefore, it is viable through the medium of video to sensitize learners to particular variances in non-verbal paralinguistic behaviour so that they understand that a different way of behaving does not mean a negative feature

of that particular interactor. This again could encourage the learners' personal development by sensitising him/her to variances in cross-cultural communicative behaviour and thus educating him/her by cultivating qualities of tolerance and understanding. (This educational perspective will be discussed further below) Given that video is an ideal medium to present aspects of non-verbal paralinguistic behaviour, it is important to investigate how much of this potential is exploited through the video materials. This will be conducted through the critical analysis of the video materials.

It is important to bear in mind that the incorporation of non-verbal behaviour stems from the sociocultural nature of interactions that are incorporated in the video materials. If they are native-speaker interactions then it will be the native-speaker form of behaviour that will be adopted and not much else. There will be no opportunity for any variation of non-verbal behaviour which stems from the varying nature of interactions to be presented. Thus the nature of the interactions is an important basic consideration in the design of video materials.

IV.4.iv

Nature of Interactions

The nature of interactions captured on language teaching video materials as a whole should portray not only role models of behaviour but also interactions that portray instances of problematic cross-cultural communicative situations. The latter is an advantageous inclusion as it would enhance learners' awareness towards variation in cross-cultural behaviour. This, as discussed earlier, would lead to learners' personal development through the gradual acquisition of qualities of tolerance and understanding.

The recommendation for ELT video materials which aim to develop the skills and awareness necessary for cross-cultural communication is the production of video materials designed along two basic functions of portraying both models of role behaviour and instances of miscommunication.

IV.4.iv.a

Role Models of Behaviour

In ELT video materials, interactions largely function as role models of behaviour (as will be seen in the critical analysis conducted in the next chapter). This involves interactors interacting in particular sociolinguistic

contexts to portray the appropriate use of different registers of language, the use of which is dependent on the role-relationships of the interactors and the nature of the formality or informality of the situation they are in.

IV.4.iv.b Instances of Miscommunication

For cross-cultural communicative purposes, interactions should also portray instances of miscommunication. This function stems from raising the awareness-levels of learners to varying sociocultural behaviour through portraying instances of communication, which stem from pragmalinguistic failure to sociopragmalinguistic failure.

This has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Section II.3, but will be summarised at this point. Pragmalinguistic failure stems from problems, which arise, when the hearer, who may come from a different sociocultural background interprets the particular speech act differently from that intended by the speaker. This, as has been recommended, can be taught to the learner using the native-speaker norm as it covers linguistic aspects of the language and therefore will not encroach on the cultural sensibilities of the learner. It therefore could be incorporated in role models of behaviour,

presenting to learners the manner in which certain language functions can be applied and interpreted in turn for particular speech acts.

Problems that stem from sociopragmatic failure are sensitive in nature because they stem from the interactors' cultural speech behaviour which is an integral part of the learners' personal make-up and which learners should not be required to change, by adopting the culture-specific behaviour of the dominant group, as it then would be an imposition on the learners' cultural identity. Instead, this can be coped with in cross-cultural communication by raising the awareness levels and sensitivity of the learner to differences in speech behaviours, through the process of analysing a particular instance of miscommunication, to find out the reasons for the breakdown.

Apart from the above distinct approaches to the nature of the interaction, that is, role models of behaviour to instances of miscommunication, two other criteria have been included in the critical analysis. These are the processes involved in the interactions which stem from personal differences and events in the story-line. They have been included because presently, the communicative problems often found in existing ELT video materials are

not dependent on verbal and non-verbal miscommunication but arise as a result of differences in personal wishes and problems which stem from dramatic story-lines. (This aspect of the video materials will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter).

The above covers the sociocultural aspects of the materials. Cunningsworth in evaluating text materials emphasised the importance of the cultural aspects as well as the importance of involving the learners actively in the materials. In relation to video materials, a parallel can be drawn in ensuring not only the sociocultural appropriacy of the materials but also involvement by the learner while viewing the materials - what is commonly referred to as ensuring active viewing. This will be promoted by the quality and nature of the design content and will be dealt with in the next section.

IV.5 General Principles Underlying the Production of ELT Video Materials from an Educational Design Perspective

There are a number of specific design criteria that need to be considered in the evaluation of ELT video materials. These design criteria stem from a number of essential general educational design features that should underlie

the production of educational video materials. It is the general features that will be discussed initially before moving onto the specific criteria.

Video is a rich, technological medium which enables it to possess the digital, analogic and dynamic iconic symbolic codes (as discussed in Chapter Three) which in turn enables it to capture realistically the movement and expression of social interaction. But the effective exploitation of the advantage of the technology of the medium is fully utilised only if the video materials that are used with it are designed such that they facilitate active viewing processes on the part of the language learner which will in turn facilitate the learning process.

IV.5.1 Principle of Active Viewing

Research carried out in the field of media and content subjects, which was discussed in Chapter Three, Section III.4.ii, proved that the simultaneous visual and aural channels via television helped learners to absorb information more efficiently. At the same time, it must be pointed out that the respondents involved in that research had a distinct purpose in viewing the materials, and as the research showed, it was the visual channel that

facilitated more efficient recall of information over the text, after a period of time had lapsed between the recall test and the viewing/reading process.

Similarly, in using the medium for language learning, a premium should be placed upon ensuring that the learner actively views the material to ensure learning takes place. Otherwise, there is a danger with television, despite its many advantages, that with its strong entertainment and relaxative association, materials will be viewed passively.

Salomon (1979) has argued for example, that while it is necessary for learners to invest mental effort for learning to take place, too often learners tend to see television as an "easy" medium compared with print. This can result in passive viewing as psychologists Merrelyn and Fred Emery (1975) drastically warn:

" ... the evidence is that television not only destroys the capacity of the viewer to attend; it also ... decreases vigilance - the general state of arousal which prepares the organism for action should its attention be drawn to a specific stimulus. The individual therefore may be looking at the unexpected or interesting, but cannot act upon it in such a way

as to complete the purposeful processing gestalt. The continuous trancelike fixation of the TV viewer is then not attention, but distraction - a form akin to day dreaming or time out." (quoted from Manders: 1977, p.205)

The implications of the above quotation may sound drastic but it does hold a warning for all those involved in video material production. Material producers should realise the necessity of incorporating features which encourage active viewing to help overcome this potential disadvantage of video.

Learners tend to regard television as a source of entertainment - a means of relaxation. When video is used in the classroom, the learner comes to it with the same associations. This can be a disadvantage because, as stated by Manders, there is the possibility that viewers tend to mentally switch off a little when watching television/video. Therefore it is essential that definite efforts are made in the design of ELT video materials to promote active viewing. This can be encouraged through a number of principles that material designers should consider carefully when developing video materials. These principles will initially be discussed individually and later a list of the criteria for evaluating the design

features, which stem from these principles will be formulated.

IV.5.ii Dichotomy between the Sophisticated Production Principle and the Learnability Principle

The most basic and important consideration which underlies and affects the nature of the other design features is the dichotomy that exists between the sophisticated production principle and the learnability principle. This is because a large number of ELT video materials are based on the design lines of broadcast television and it is important to inquire whether this promotes the learnability principle which should dominate the design of ELT video materials.

The sophisticated production principle is based on the lines of broadcast television - glossy productions of high technical quality that possess elements of drama, strong story lines, professional actors and actresses and elaborate sets. Learners are highly motivated by such materials because it is so like television and most learners enjoy watching television, especially if it has a story-line in it which makes a change from the language learning experience in the classroom. But the question that should be posed is how much of learning takes place?

Viewing television/video does not naturally mean that learning automatically takes place - it is only when the learner is made to view actively that learning is facilitated, as has been discussed before.

Research at the Open University has found out that a proportional increase in motivation regarding the materials does not result in a proportional increase in learning.

"... our researches show that while most students enjoy sophisticated documentary-style programmes, they are much less likely to understand the educational purpose of such programmes, or to know how to make use of them within the context of their studies, than is the case with the more straightforward didactic type of presentation."
(Gallagher: 1978, p.203)

A similar experience can be found in the Korean context. David Preswell, in researching on the appropriateness of 'Follow Me' (BBC) in the Indonesian and the South Korean context, found that,

"American television programmes are more popular than the British ones in Korea. This might be put down to

pro-American prejudice, but seems also to be a response to the practical approach of the American programmes: scenes ... which are relevant to learner needs, the inclusion of pronunciation drills ... and the repeating of items several times to ensure comprehension." (Preswell: 1987, p.15)

The important point arising from above is that there needs to be a balance maintained between the entertainment and the educational principles. As Preswell further emphasises,

"... entertainment value should not be the primary criterion of a teaching video. Language students ... want to learn English. If they can be entertained whilst they learn, all the better, but the end is the learning of English, and if a language series overlooks this, it is failing the student ..."
(Preswell: 1987, p.17)

Therefore even though the medium is an advantage with its presentational characteristics, producers must be aware that this advantage can only be fully exploited for language teaching purposes if the materials encourage active viewing.

If the materials are designed to engage the mental faculties of the viewers, through the various design features, which will be discussed later, then there need be less worry regarding passive viewing and the lack of facilitation of learning from television.

Having discussed the need to maintain pedagogical considerations in the production of ELT video materials, it is timely to express a need to maintain the quality of interest in the materials themselves. Interest in this case does not mean the inclusion of features of sophisticated productions, as discussed above. Instead, it means the portrayal of pedagogical aspects of the video materials in an interesting and motivating manner. For pedagogical materials to be of optimum value to learners, there must be a balance between the interest and educational principles.

IV.5.iii Balance between Interest and Educational Principles in ELT Video Materials

Bela Mody has a message for us all when she comments in the context of message design in the field of communication that which is equally applicable in the design of instructional materials. She says,

"..... so much of message design is art and creativity: if you can't attract and hold attention, then irrespective of how relevant the message is you could well put a relevant message into a lullaby and send everyone to sleep!" (Mody interviewed by Potts: 1979, p.172)

This is the very principle that has attributed to the success of "Sesame Street" which today is one of the most popular childrens' educational programmes in many parts of the world. The Children's Television Workshop (CTW) produced 'Sesame Street' with priority given to both educating as well as entertaining the young viewers. Duncan Kenworth, a CTW consultant says that during production,

"The researchers are tugging towards education, the producers tugging toward entertainment. The dynamic tension which results achieves both ends." (quoted from Tracy: 1980, p.15)

This 'tension' should be maintained between sophisticated production and the learnability principle in the production of ELT video materials. This can be done by ensuring that language teaching video materials possess features which encourage active viewing and are at the

same time interesting. It is the combination of these two aspects that will facilitate learning from ELT video materials. Gallagher reaffirms the importance of concentrating on the learning process by saying,

".... the pressure to achieve professional standards can have some disadvantage in an educational setting if it is not kept in perspective. I say this because it is generally true that concentration on production standards emphasizes the product - the programme itself - while the process which it is supposed to be assisting - the learning process risks being ignored." (Gallagher: 1978, p.204)

If the above advice is not heeded, then materials run the risk of maintaining professional standards at the expense of facilitating learning. To ensure the existence of the underlying pedagogical principles in the design and planning of video materials, producers of ELT video material should plan the teaching and learning aspects of the materials before discussing the production aspects.

IV.6. Criteria for Evaluating Design Features of ELT Video Materials

Having dealt with the general educational design perspectives that should be considered in the production of ELT video materials, it is timely to move onto the more specific design features of video materials. The inclusion of these specific design features encourage active viewing of materials that are both pedagogically relevant as well as interesting. The design criteria for this evaluation stems from both the recommended general and specific design features that should be considered in the production of ELT video materials.

IV.6.i Design Format of ELT Video Materials

ELT video materials can either function as courses in themselves or as resource materials.

Video materials that function as courses in themselves usually possess a strong story-line which runs through the entire package. On the other hand, video materials that function as resource materials are made up of sequences which are independent in themselves.

• ELT video materials, which are designed as courses do not

possess the flexibility which would allow existing language courses to use these video materials as a resource. As McGovern says,

"There is a great danger that the series becomes the curriculum and the video not an aid but one's master." (McGovern: 1980, p.127)

In contrast, ELT video materials that are designed as resource, possess the flexibility that enables the teacher to use video for the role that it is best suited for when she feels the learners need it, for instance to contextualise the use of particular functions at the beginning of a lesson or to consolidate the use of particular functions in context, after the structures and communicative practice exercises have been dealt with. It does not place the entire onus on the medium. The following quotation summarises the above point and places in perspective the role that video should play in a language course. The video practitioners at a Video Colloquium in Germany (1983), firmly advocated that,

"... video was not to be seen as motivating in itself; nor was it to bulk so large that it became an end in itself: video as a resource to be phased in at an appropriate moment in a learning cycle was perhaps

the most useful methodological perspective to adopt. Ignoring this perspective could well lead to a Switch on the Video - Switch off the learner syndrome." (Jones and Mackiewicz: 1983, p.6)

We now move on to the features that should exist in ELT video materials essential for facilitating active viewing. The implementation of these features is tied-up with the design format adopted, as will be seen in the critical analysis carried out in the next chapter.

IV.6.ii Active Viewing and ELT Video Materials

The 'intervention', recommended by Bates, which is necessary in programmes designed for instruction, should make explicit the teaching point and the ideas presented. This could be implemented in language teaching video materials through the implementation of a number of devices, for example, pedagogical devices, which will enable greater active involvement to be carried out during the viewing process.

IV.8.11.a Inclusion of Pedagogical Devices

The use of pedagogical devices can be found in the educational television context amongst others. In the educational television context, Gallagher recommends that it might be beneficial to pedagogically break up the film sequence by:

"more academic 'intervention' in case-study programmes: pointing out through commentary in advance of a film sequence what to look for; guiding students during a sequence (by caption or voice-over); breaking into a narrative flow, and perhaps subsequently repeating a film sequence with a academic analysis of the commentary, or raising questions about the meaning or what has gone on before." (Gallagher: 1978, p.206)

Even though the above is recommended in the context of the use of case-study documentaries for educational television, it has a message for ELT video materials. The recommendations are a way of maximising the learning process while the learner is viewing ELT video materials. For example, the learner could be told, through a voice-over, to focus on certain aspects of differences in sociocultural behaviour before a particular sequence is

shown - this could maximise interaction between the learner and the materials even at the initial viewing stage.

A common criticism of the above recommendation of the inclusion of pedagogical devices is that it does not matter that materials do not possess these devices. Instead, it is often felt that it is more important they possess drama-like features of real television because video, with its technological advantage is able to exercise 'control' over the materials via the above techniques.

One of the key methods of exploitation, as discussed in Chapter Three, Section III.7, is the utilisation of the freeze-frame facility to pause at a particular point of the interaction and to point out particular relevant features. Another method of exploitation is through the use of the sound only or visual only facilities to exploit the different modes of presentations. But I reiterate that unless the materials are produced with a premium placed on active viewing, then the utilisation of the above control characteristics can be an over-kill, as criticised by MacWilliam in the previous chapter. (See Section III.6.ii) Why place the onus entirely on the exploitation techniques when the learning process could be

facilitated so much more with careful planning in the material design? Only after the latter has been ensured, should the appropriate utilisation of the exploitation techniques be utilised.

IV.6.ii.b Length of Video Text

Another suggestion to encourage more active viewing and to facilitate learning is related to the length of the videotext. There have been recent calls among video practitioners to use video materials that are short in length, about six to seven minutes, because anything longer that stretches up to thirty or forty minutes, "would lead to a steep decline in the amount of aural information retained." (Vernon: 1953) The danger with long sequences, as discussed in Chapter Three, Section III.7.ii.b, is that teachers may play them through without interruption. This does not facilitate the learning process, as learners will not be viewing purposefully but may regard the viewing sessions as periods of entertainment.

MacKnight (1983) who carried out a survey on the use of video in tertiary institutions in Britain found that the majority of institutions stated a preference for,

"'snippets of authentic language at work in a wide variety of situations', that can easily be slotted into the language programme." (MacKnight: 1983, p.12)

IV.6.ii.c Synchronisation between Audio and Visual Channels

The relationship between the audio and visual channels is of utmost importance especially to elementary learners of the language. In fact, a parallel can be drawn between beginners who are learning the language and children's viewing ability. As discussed in Chapter Three, Section III.4.ii, children have difficulty processing information from the visual and the aural channels. The visual channel interferes in certain instances with the aural channel. Similarly, learners who have not sufficiently mastered the verbal component of the language would face similar difficulties if the visual channel does not sufficiently support the aural. The danger is that if it happens, then this might pose a serious obstacle to the learner who wishes to learn the language. It would almost certainly diminish the advantage of the medium in its ability to contextualise the interactions to facilitate comprehension and learning of the appropriate use of language.

Fisher recommends that the visual and aural channels in language teaching materials should encourage the complementary model in the viewing process of the learner. This is to "process the visual and the linguistic information, achieve some sort of cognitive matching and thus strengthen any shortcomings in the linguistic mode by using visual information." (Fisher: 1984, p.88)

Similarly, Allan's recommendations made in the ELT context are closely tied to the complementary model. She says,

"A close link between what the picture tells you and what the sound conveys is important for elementary level students. They need all the help they can get in following a language they don't know at all well. For more advanced students, on the other hand, you may be looking for material where the picture gives less support and the comprehension challenge is correspondingly greater." (Allan: 1985, p.23)

But for the intermediate and advanced learners, since their command of the basics of the language is much better, they should progress onto materials which do not hold a close link between the visual and the aural. This is because not all instances of communication in real-life possess a close link between the audio and visual. It was recommended in Chapter Two, that advanced learners should

be taken onto developing cross-cultural communicative skills through the presentation of instances of miscommunication. Thus, not having to ensure the close synchronisation between the audio and the visual channels, would widen the scope of the inclusion of different varieties of communicative events for the learners who have mastered the basic proficiency of the language.

Another aspect of the visual channels that ought to be discussed is the appropriate and purposeful inclusion of visuals. This might seem odd, considering that we are discussing a medium whose main advantage is the ability to present the dynamic visual channel. But it is important to ensure that the visuals are pedagogically applied.

The recommendations made in the role of visuals in textbooks has relevance from which lessons can be learnt for the use of visuals in television. Dickinson criticises the use of visuals in textbooks generally by saying,

"One could reasonably argue that the image-packed, colourful and flashy designs of many communicative language learning textbooks are more concerned with advertising and marketing than teaching."
(Dickinson: 1984, p.461)

In "this context, Cunningsworth advises" that, "where visuals are both attractive as illustrations and integral to the course as teaching material, we have a bonus. Attractive presentation is certainly important, but it is of primary importance that visuals should be rooted in the teaching material rather than superimposed on it." (Cunningsworth: 1984, p.52) For video materials, it is pedagogically crucial to ensure that visuals do not simply fill up the screen as "wallpaper" (Allan: 1985, p.26) but possess a meaningful and purposeful function.

Having discussed some of the essential features in the design aspects of ELT video materials, the ideal, of course, is a set of carefully prepared materials based on sound pedagogical principles which are at the same time interesting and which teach the learner not just the language, but given the rich medium of video, should be able to educate the learner as well.

IV.7 Criteria for Evaluating Design Features of ELT Video Materials

Stemming from the discussion above, the specific criteria for the evaluation of the design features should incorporate the following:

design format: sequences linked by story-line vs.
independent sequences
length of video sequences
inclusion of pedagogical devices
synchronisation between audio and visual channels
element of interest
educational principles - learners' personal development

IV.8 Conclusion

It must always be remembered that video is an audio-visual aid like so many other media. Its strengths that enable it to be motivating and useful for language teaching could very easily turn to weaknesses. This will result in disillusionment on the part of the users who will gradually become aware that they are not receiving video materials which have been produced with a premium placed on a number of crucial factors - the subject matter, the learner, the socio-cultural background and the

exploitation of the advantages of the technology in the design of the materials.

Therefore to ensure the pedagogical quality of the materials, an essential part of the process of the production of video materials for language teaching should be the conduct of research to ascertain the following:

- i. the quality of the materials from the sociocultural and design perspectives as will be carried out in the next chapter through a critical analysis of the ELT video materials used in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The critical analysis will use the criteria worked out in this chapter as the basis.
- ii. the attitudes and reactions of learners to the sociocultural perspectives of the materials, which will be investigated via questionnaires. In the questionnaires, it is the sociocultural perspectives that are emphasised because it is an area that learners need to be able to relate to, to facilitate their learning of the language.

Chapter Five: Critical Analysis of the Sociocultural and Design Content of ELT Video Materials

V.1 Introduction

The critical analysis of the sociocultural and design content of ELT video material will be based on the list of criteria that were formulated in Chapter Four. These criteria are embedded in the sociocultural context in which English is used as an International language for language learners in the ASEAN region, and the basic principle of encouraging active viewing through the incorporation of design features which will facilitate learnability.

Even though the sociocultural and design features are discussed separately, when considering production, it is both the sociocultural features (context, participants and the nature of the interaction) and the design features (the devices/measures incorporated to enable active viewing) that should be considered simultaneously as the effectiveness of one depends on the other and vice-versa.

It must be pointed out that any critical comments in this research are made in the context of recommendations for future video materials for English language learners in

the ASEAN countries generally, and Malaysia specifically.

V.2 Scope of Critical Analysis

Most ELT video materials are produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, the British Council and large commercial publishing firms, for example, Macmillan, Oxford University Press and Longmans. These materials are produced for the local and the international markets. Given the cost and scale of the production of commercial video materials, it takes organizations like the British Broadcasting Corporation or the British Council in conjunction with large publishing firms to possess resources and the capital to enable them to produce ELT teaching material as expensive as commercial ELT video materials.

The materials that will be included in this research are largely BBC productions, with a specific focus on 'Video English' (Macmillan and the British Council). The reason for the inclusion of these materials and not all else stems from the fact that the production of ELT video materials has grown to be a continually expanding commercial enterprise. As a result, over the past few years, there has been a profusion of materials developed for English language teaching purposes. Thus it was felt

to be appropriate to restrict the analysis to the materials being used by the Language Centre at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, where the research is practically centred. As a result, the materials covered will be, Video English: 1982, The British Council and Macmillan; The Sadrina Project: 1978, BBC and Bid for Power: 1982, BBC. Where relevant, the features of other ELT video materials will be included to illuminate particular aspects of the analysis.

V.3 Conduct of the Analysis

The sociocultural and design criteria listed in the following table will be the base against which the video materials will be evaluated. The justification of the selection of the various criteria has been discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, the actual analysis of the video material will be followed by a discussion of the extent to which the materials measure up to the various evaluative criteria. To illuminate pertinent aspects of the discussion, various examples from the above mentioned ELT video materials will be referred to.

Table V.1

Evaluation of Sociocultural and Design Features of ELT

Video Materials			
Sociocultural Criteria	Video English	Sadrina Project	Bid for Power
<u>nature of participants</u>			
British native-speakers	+	+	+
Non-native speakers	-	+	+
<u>nature of the sociocultural settings</u>			
British sociocultural settings	+	+	-
Asian sociocultural settings	-	+	-
Sociocultural settings in an imaginary country	-	-	+
<u>Variety of English spoken by participants</u>			
<u>Native speakers</u>			
RP	-	-	-
Educated standard British with unmarked accent	+	+	+
Mild regional accent	+	-	-
Pronounced regional accent	-	-	-
<u>Non-native speakers</u>			
Educated standard with unmarked accent	-	+	+
Mild ethnic accent	-	+	+
Pronounced ethnic accent	-	-	-

Sociocultural Criteria	Video English	Sadrina Project	Bid for Power
<u>Nonverbal behaviour</u>			
Based on native-speaker mode of behaviour	+	+	+
Socioculturally varying behaviour	-	-	-
<u>Nature of Interactions</u>			
Role model of behaviour: instances of successful communication	+	+	+
Instances of miscommunication			
a. pragmalinguistic failure	-	-	-
b. sociopragmatic failure	-	-	-
c. personal differences	+	+	+
d. events in the story-line	-	+	+
<u>Design Criteria</u>			
<u>Design Format</u>			
Sequences linked by a story-line	-	+	+
Independent sequences	+	-	-
<u>Length of Video Sequences</u>			
short snippets of 1-3 mins.	+	-	-
longer seqs. of 5-10 mins.	+	-	-
much longer seqs. of 15-20 mins.	-	+	+
<u>Inclusion of Pedagogical Devices</u>	-	-	-
<u>Synchronisation btw. verbal and visual channels</u>			
Close synchronisation	+	+	(minimal)+
Lesser synchronisation	+	+	+
Dominance of visual	+	(moderate) +	+

V.4 Analysis of the Sociocultural Criteria

V.4.1 Monomodel Approach of 'Video English'

From the table, it can be seen that the manifestations of the sociolinguistic components in 'Video English' are entirely native-speaker based - the portrayal of native-speakers interacting with each other in British sociocultural settings. The following examples provide an idea of the sociolinguistic manifestations in the video materials.

Sample of Sequences

VC2, Module 1, Sequence 1: The Barbecue

Function: 'Asking Someone to do Something'

This is portrayed in the following situation:

Two children are playing with a frisbee by the river. Their father is lying on a blanket. The mother is on a boat moored to the river bank.

Mother: Come on. Give me a hand you lot. (She reaches for the barbecue.) Right then. You take the barbecue, Jim.

Jim takes the barbecue.

Mother: Can you manage the charcoal, Jane?

Jane: Yeah.

Mother: George, could you help me?

George: Right you are.

(He helps her bring things from the boat onto the river bank.) End of sequence.

VC1 Module 2 Sequence 4: The Fishmonger's

Functions: Asking for Things, Greeting People, Taking Leave, Responding Negatively, Inquiring about Satisfaction, Expressing Satisfaction, Inquiring about Want.

Woman walks into a fishmonger's shop. The fishmonger walks up to her.

Fishmonger: Afternoon.

Woman: Oh, good afternoon. Er ... could I have a pound of cod, please?

Fishmonger: Pound of cod?

He picks up some cod, weighs it, wraps it and hands it to the woman.

Fishmonger: One ninety-one.

Woman: And I'd like some lobster.

Fishmonger: Sorry love. Haven't got any lobster today.

Woman: Oh, dear. Er ... well, do you have any kippers?

Fishmonger: Kippers? Yes. (He laughs and points

to the kippers.) How many do you want?

Woman: Two please.

He picks up the kippers.

Fishmonger: These alright?

Woman: Fine.

He weighs and wraps them.

Fishmonger: One-o-one. Anything else?

Woman: No, that's all, thank you.

She hands him a five pound note.

Fishmonger: That's two ninety-two altogether.

Thanks very much.

He goes to get change.

Fishmonger: Two ninety-two, three, four, five pounds. Thanks very much.

Woman: Thank you. Goodbye.

Fishmonger: Bye.

The production of these materials are in the main based on the monomodel approach. (This was discussed in Chapter Two, Section II.4.i) This seems to work on the assumption that if language is learnt as it is presented in the native-speaker sociocultural context, with all its related sociocultural norms of behaviour, than any other interactions, for example, between non-native and native speakers, via the English language should take place

without any problem in the communicative event. It does not seem to recognise the fact that interactions in the EIL contexts involve both verbal and non-verbal manifestations which are dependent on the sociocultural background of the interactors and which may pose problems in communication.

An additional point of interest concerns the British representation of sociocultural features in 'Video English', which is dominant 'white' native-speaker based. Even among the dominant 'white' native-speaker group, there exists cultures and sub-cultures. If the defence of the exclusion of the other sub-cultural groups within the dominant group is that it is the norms of the "culturally dominant strata" (Thomas: 1983, p.91) which is singled out because "... the patterns we are describing hold true in a general way ...", (Scollon and Scollon: 1981, p.13) there is less defence for the exclusion of the growing multi-ethnic cultural population in Britain. This is especially so since the video packages regularly state that it is aimed at learners who are interested in studying or working in Britain. This is where the materials could be criticised, because learners from other countries will experience a culture-shock if they expect the video materials to be representative of social life in Britain because in reality, Britain is a multi-racial

society but this is not reflected in any way in the English language teaching video materials on the whole.

V.4.ii Incorporation of Non-Native Speaker Settings in BBC Productions

The BBC productions, as seen from the checklist, do incorporate non-native speaker settings, in the case of 'The Sadrina Project', and other international settings, in the case of 'Bid for Power'. This is described by Barbara Goldsmid, the present Head of English by Radio and Television, BBC, (at the time of writing) who said in response to a brief report of this research which appeared in the January issue of the IATEFL newsletter (1987),

"I am sure the premise that video can be used very effectively to portray English in multi-cultural settings and use is sound: BBC English by Television accepted it as long ago as 1977 with "The Sadrina Project" which featured a number of non-native speakers (mostly but not all from Southeast Asia) using English in working and social situations. Since then two further series, "Bid for Power" and the recently completed "The Carsat Crisis" portray English being used in a multi-national context. In all cases this feature seems to have been appreciated

by learners and teachers." (Goldsmid: May, 1987)

These video packages take a small step in the right direction in recognising that English is used as a means of communication between non-native speakers as well as native speakers in many parts of the world.

It does this in "The Sadrina Project" by portraying:

" ... non-British speakers of English, appearing in their own countries and speaking their own varieties of the language, ... a movement from merely showing English people speaking a single variety of English in the United Kingdom, and an acknowledgement that learners of English who watch series like 'The Sadrina Project' will probably have to use the language outside the U.K." (Hambrook: 1979, p.141)

The 'Sadrina Project' must be singled out and commended for its efforts in portraying interactions involving non-native speakers operating in English, with their own distinct varieties, where to a large extent, the grammatical forms are close to that of the native-speaker norm, but with the retention of their own local accents. The non-native speakers are usually involved in service jobs, for example, the customs official, the tour agent,

the hotel receptionist and their interactions are mainly with the protagonist of the series, David Forster, who in his capacity as an employee of a major tour company, is touring the various countries in Southeast Asia to explore the possibilities of organising tour packages to the East.

"Bid for Power" portrays multi-national communication by being,

"filmed in six countries, using English-speaking actors of different nationalities. The cultural settings and business practises are international rather than specifically British or American, and the social activities in which business people are involved are given prominent attention." (Hambrook in the BBC English-teaching video courses brochure)

The BBC must be commended for acknowledging the function of English as a means of communication outside the United Kingdom. At the same time, the materials must be further studied to assess what this acknowledgement has meant in terms of the nature of the interactions - if they are role models of behaviour, whose mode of behaviour is it based on? Can there be an international mode of behaviour? In addition, are instances of miscommunication incorporated at all, since including speakers from outside the United

Kingdom also means incorporating varying sociocultural settings, which thus should provide opportunities for focusing on instances of miscommunication. These are the issues that will be focused on in the following sections.

V.4.iii What is an International Mode of Behaviour?

"Bid for Power" is set in Tanaku, an imaginary sub-tropical country. It is stated in the BBC Video Course Description that "the cultural settings and business practices are international rather than specifically British or American ..." (Walton: 1988, p.42)

The question to be posed here is what is meant by international? International in this context seems to mean the incorporation of interactors who are from the imaginary country "Tanaku" as well as business persons from Japan, Europe and United States, who interact with each other via the native-speaker mode of behaviour - both in the verbal and the non-verbal mode.

There does not exist an international 'neutral' mode of behaviour. Each mode of behaviour is influenced by a particular cultural background. What could contribute to the facilitation of international communication is the development of culture-general modes of behaviour-

abstract qualities like openness, flexibility, tolerance, that will help interactors cope with the differences in culture-specific social modes of behaviour. Interactors do not adopt international modes of behaviour but develop qualities to enable them to adapt to situations of diversity.

Even business practises are not free from this culture-specificity. If they were, multi-national corporations would not spend enormous amounts of money on cross-cultural training to enable their personnel to cope effectively in the cross-cultural interactions they would have to be involved with. (Chapter Two, Section II.8, presents examples of projects that deal with intercultural language training.)

The next feature raised in the checklist is the aspect of non-verbal behaviour. As discussed in Chapter Two, a large part of communication is conveyed not only through the verbal but also through non-verbal channels. The non-verbal channels focused on are defined as the non-vocal aspects of proximity, gestures and facial expressions which have culture-specific manifestations and which consequently may pose problems in cross-cultural communication.

V.4.iv The Nature of the Focus on Non-Verbal Behaviour

'Video English' explicitly states that it provides very clear models of British gestures, facial expressions, etc. The Teachers' Book aptly describes the materials as,

" realistic and authentic. Each scene depicts credible day-to-day scenes of British life ... 'Video English' ... provides very clear models of British gestures and facial expressions etc. Learners can easily perceive in what way these features would differ from those in their own countries." (Bury and Bailey: 1983, p.vi and ix)

The materials minimally attempt to focus on the use of non-vocal gestures in communication. When it is focused on, the learners' attention is focused on these through the text, so that they can judge in what ways these features would differ from how the similar functions would be conveyed through gestures in their own cultures.

As a start, this is suitable because learners can perceive in what ways the non-verbal behaviour differs from theirs. But given the learners' needs in communicating in an EIL context, and the richness of the medium of video to facilitate the portrayal of interactions which incorporate differing modes of behaviour, the use of the medium as it

stands has been under-utilised. The materials should be extended to include interactors from differing sociocultural backgrounds interacting with each other and displaying different modes of behaviour, which might lead to problems in communication via the English language. This approach might be more relevant to learners' needs as discussed in Chapter Two, Section II.5.ii.

'Video Way', the text written by Ladau-Hajulin and Morgan (1986), based on the video series, 'Bid for Power', has a number of exercises which have been carefully worked out, some of which focus on the non-verbal aspects of the video presentations. But because the video material is restricted in terms of the modes of social behaviour-concentrating only on the Western norms of behaviour, consequently the questions also focused on Western norms of behaviour. For example, most of the exercises which encourage learners to focus on non-vocal behaviour, provide questions such as:

In your country, would Christine's kissing Silva be considered,

_____ odd

_____ reprehensible

_____ acceptable

Another example is,

How do you interpret Bettina's facial expression?

There are various other exercises but they all focus on the non-verbal manifestations of the native-speaker mode of behaviour.

As mentioned earlier, these do point the learner in the direction of focusing on the non-verbal behaviour in an interaction and the ways in which these models of behaviour differ from that of the learners'. But, as discussed in Chapter Two, in the context of EIL, non-vocal behaviour to a large extent is culture-specific and it would have been more advantageous to present differences in non-vocal behaviour that could interfere with, or that could facilitate communication in cross-cultural communicative instances.

The exercises from the above text show that the nature of the recommended exercises, whether focusing on verbal or non-verbal behaviour is dependent on the nature of the video materials. It seems an obvious statement but it has to be made explicit to show that it is not merely how the materials are exploited in class that is important, as advocated by the majority of video practitioners, (See Section III.6.i) but it is the very nature of the

materials themselves that are important because they form the base which influence the nature of the pedagogical suggestions in the text materials, which consequently will affect the exploitation of the medium in the language classroom.

Thus, the analysis does not cover the cultural variations in turn-taking, proxemics etc., not because they are not an integral part of communication, (in fact, it is argued otherwise in Chapter Two, Section II.2.iii), but because unless the general parameters are developed along intercultural lines, these features will not be portrayed in communicative instances. The general parameters of existing video materials, as discussed above, are based on either a monomodel native-speaker base or an international communication base - which despite its claims of international interactions still uses the native-speaker mode of behaviour as the model.

The video materials must be further studied to assess the nature of the interactions and the design features within an overall educational context to determine how they contribute to the principle of learnability. As mentioned earlier, in production it is the sociocultural and design features that should be considered simultaneously as the effectiveness of one depends on the other and vice-versa.

V.5 The Nature of Interactions

V.5.i Models of Behaviour

From the checklist, it is clear that the three ELT video materials present models of behaviour. For example, in 'The Sadrina Project', it is stated that,

"Without overt teaching, the films present the English the traveller will need in a variety of typical situations - buying tickets, shopping, changing money and so on. It also recognises that travellers need a wider range of language abilities: how to talk not only to hotel staff and customs officials, but also how to invite people to a meal, or a drink, arrange to meet them, and to handle social contacts of all kinds." (McIver: 1979, p.ix)

'Video English' is the only set of video materials that due to its resourceful design, clearly explicates the nature of the interactive sequences which have been designed as models of behaviour, for the various levels, ranging from basic to advanced. The following table depicts the design of the interactive sequences.

Design of Interactive Sequences of 'Video English'

Level	Videocassette	Design Features
Basic	VC1 and VC2	Short sequences which present basic communicative functions of English by means of single social transactions.
Lower	VC3 and VC4	Basic functions are recycled and presented in more complex combinations and in slightly longer sequences. The language used in the sequences cannot always be predicted from the visual information.
Upper	VC5 and VC6	These longer sequences present more complex social situations where numerous communication problems occur. The language presented, while still controlled is primarily determined by the language needed to solve each problem.
Advanced	VC7 and VC8	These sequences are designed as stimuli for classroom discussion

and debate. The issues raised are open-ended, and there is no restriction on the range of language used.

In 'Video English', the models of behaviour are exemplified by producing video materials that have a closer match between the visual image and the aural channel for beginners, in the form of 'single social transactions' and gradually, as the students get more advanced, to have materials which do not have such a close match between the two channels - the visual and the aural, in the form of 'more complex social situations where numerous communication problems occur.' (The nature of the communication problems will be analysed in Section V.5.ii)

On the other hand, in the BBC productions, the nature of the interactions stem out of the dominant story-line. It is the strong story-line that gives rise to the particular interactions, which is an interesting and motivating approach but is at the same time one which can give rise to problems due to the dominance of the story-line and the reduced emphasis on the synchronisation between the audio and the visual channels.

For language learners who are not sure of who their potential interactors will be, the approach adopted in material design should be extended further. In this case, learners need to be taken beyond presentations of models of behaviour. With cross-cultural communication becoming the norm rather than the exception, learners need to be equipped with cross-cultural communicative skills to enable them to cope with the principles of diversity and adaptability which is one of the chief characteristics of English as an International language. It would be impossible to expect learners to emulate the different sociocultural modes of behaviour of different groups given that it is multiple codes and multiple behaviours they would have to contend with. Instead, there should be a process of awareness-raising towards the differences in speech behaviour that could lead to problems. With this awareness, learners would be in a better position to interact cross-culturally and not to resort to stereotyped attitudes regarding the different speech behaviours of speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds.

This means that it is not sufficient to present materials with non-native speakers engaged in problem-free routine negotiations with either native or non-native speakers. Learners should be introduced to video materials which function as instances of miscommunication. We now move

onto an analysis of how the problem areas of communication have been incorporated in existing video materials.

V.5.11 Instances of Miscommunication

'Video English' in its intermediate level cassette does attempt to portray instances of miscommunication. Videocassette 5 and 6 of 'Video English' presents "more complex social situations where numerous communication problems occur." (Bury and Bailey: 1983, p.vii) The following is a summary of one of the social situations.

Summary of VC5 Sequence 2

A couple enters a shoe shop. The wife says she is looking for a pair of evening shoes, but offers no more information apart from the fact that she takes a very small size.

Problem: The shop assistant has to deal with an awkward customer, and at the same time she has to try to make a sale. The woman rejects several shoes in a brusque way. The husband keeps quiet but is clearly embarrassed. The assistant finds it increasingly difficult to remain polite.

Problem: Should the husband intervene, and if so, how?

The husband finally intervenes and forcibly suggests that the wife takes the first pair of shoes. The assistant and the husband join forces in persuading the wife, who eventually capitulates in some confusion. She is probably surprised by her husband's unexpected intervention.

Summary of VC5 Sequence 5

SCENE 1

A man enters a car showroom and expresses great interest in an Austin Maestro. A salesman tries to increase his interest by showing him all the attractive features of the car. Meanwhile, the man's wife enters the showroom and takes great interest in a smaller Austin Metro. She comes up to her husband, and a clear difference of opinion develops.

Problem: Does the salesman intervene in the difference of opinion, and if so how?

The salesman offers to show the man the Metro, but the man shows no interest. The salesman leaves, and the couple continue discussing the two cars. In the end, the wife points out that the Metro is much cheaper.

Problem: Which car should they buy?

Should the husband give in to the wife, or should the wife

give in to the husband?

SCENE 2

The couple are seen about to drive away in the Metro.

(Bury and Potter: 1983, p.11 and p.51)

These are examples of miscommunications which occur between husband and wife over particular issues, not so much the result of differences in modes of social behaviour or schematic knowledge but about differences in personal wishes.

In the 'Sadrina Project', the types of problems that emerge arise out of the storyline. For instance, in one of the dialogues, 'Discussing Difficulties',

"Ron Howells thought that the Sadrina Project was too risky and unsuitable for Marsden Travel to become involved in. The following dialogue is based on the discussion between Ron Howells and Bill Marsden in the film ...

Howells: I tell you it won't work, Bill. There's nothing new about package tours to South-East Asia. Travel firms in this country have been operating them for years.

Marsden: Yes. But they've been operating mainly in the winter. Sadrina's proposal is for tours all the

year round. It will offer our regular clients exciting new places to go to. It's exactly what they want.

Howells: Well, we can't afford this project. It's too risky. And it means going into partnership with Sadrina, someone we've never worked with, in a part of the world we don't know. Let's continue to operate in Europe. We know Europe. ...

Sadrina: Look, Ron. I've got my own doubts about the project too. But at least we should try to find out what it has to offer Marsden Travel.

(McIver: 1979, p.19)

A general criticism could be made of video materials for English language teaching as a whole, both materials depicting only native-speaker interactions - 'Video English' and those depicting native-speaker and non-native speaker interactions - 'The Sadrina Project'. These materials present instances of smooth interactions occurring without any interactive problems. Instead, the problems arise out of personal wishes or mishaps in plans as seen in the checklist. Granted that initially when learners are grappling with the code of the language, they need to be shown representations of idealised forms to use in context. But learners, need to be given the opportunity to move beyond this stage. They have to be

taken beyond it to,

"the development of concrete skills and for that reason (materials) need to include examples of miscommunication as well as of successful communication. The weakness of most materials is that they present only idealised, trouble free communication among native speakers. Learners are not shown how to deal with confusion, misinterpretation, incorrect conclusions, negative judgements and other aspects of real world communication." (Baxter: 1980a, p.8) in Baxter and Levine's review of 'Crosstalk' (Baxter and Levine: 1982)

If learners are to be taught how to handle instances of miscommunication which occur because of sociocultural differences then the sociocultural factor in video materials becomes even more crucial. This is because miscommunications occur because of differences in schematic knowledge which stem from the sociocultural knowledge. Therefore in producing video materials for learners of EIL, it would benefit them to be presented with materials which portray interactors from different sociocultural backgrounds interacting with each other, in instances of miscommunication as well as successful

communication.

The careful planning of the sociocultural features and the nature of the interactions in ELT video materials would enable them to be more relevant and motivating for language learners in the ASEAN region.

We now move onto the nature of the design features which play an important role in facilitating the learning process, as discussed in the previous chapter.

V.6 Analysis of the Design Criteria

In this part of the critical analysis, given the contrastive design features of the following productions, it will be the BBC productions, 'The Sadrina Project' and 'Bid for Power' that will be compared with 'Video English' (Macmillan and British Council).

V.6.1 ELT Video Materials which function as a Course

Referring to the checklist, it can be clearly seen that in the BBC productions, the video component plays a key role in the course. Revolving around the video component are the accompanying texts and audio-cassettes. It is the nature of the design format that influences the make-up of

the other design features. Thus, the key features of the video components are:

- i. a strong story line which runs through the entire video package
- ii. a resulting sequential story link between one episode and the next, thus impeding the flexibility of the video package; that is, materials have to be used in a fixed order.
- iii. a viewing time of approximately 15 - 20 minutes for each episode, which is long for a language lesson, considering that there are no pedagogical devices in the material which encourage active viewing.
- iv. no clear-cut points of division within the episodes, which would enable a teacher to stop at a definite point, to discuss or review what has gone on before. This, done with the present set of materials tends to interrupt the strong story-line and may cause irritation on the part of the learner who, similarly when watching television does not like interruptions in between especially for shows with a strong drama element in them.

In fact, these materials would function ideally as drama on television. They possess all the qualities of good television. MacWilliam draws the parallel by describing ELT video materials as possessing features of,

"many of the conventional production values of broadcast TV - the need to entertain, dramatic presentation, good acting, good visual effects ..."
(Macwilliam: 1987, p.13)

An example is 'The Sadrina Project' which,

"offers motivation by means of an interesting drama serial set in attractive locations, authenticity in its presentation of genuine travellers and travel business staff using English in real hotels, airports, restaurants etc. ... The twelve units of the course are based on the twelve episodes of a video serial about David Forster, an inexperienced executive in a travel firm who is sent on a reconnaissance to South-East Asia. He has to deal with numerous problems and intrigues, involving travel firms and individuals in several countries, before he successfully completes his assignment."
(Walton: 1988, p.44)

Similarly, 'Bid for Power' also possesses a strong drama-line. It is,

"in the form of a drama serial set in the world of international commerce and industry. The story

concerns Tanaku, a sub-tropical country whose development prospects are dramatically changed by the discovery of high-grade quartz on a deserted beach" (Walton: 1988, p.42)

Judging from the features above, it is obvious that the above productions are designed to be used as courses in themselves, with episodes to be used in sequence. They do not possess the flexibility which would allow existing language courses to use these video materials as resource.

V.6.ii ELT Video Materials as Resource

In contrast, the main design features of 'Video English' enables it to provide the flexibility that many existing language courses look for. It is mainly for this reason that at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 'Video English' was chosen for the 'Communication Skills' course. It needed video material based on functional sequences, as supplementary material for the course. 'Video English' was designed according to features which met the resource requirements of the course. Its flexibility stems from the fact that:

"Each sequence is independent. 'Video English' has been designed not as a course, but as a set of fully

independent resource materials, which teachers can integrate into their own programmes at the times they choose, and indeed in what order they choose. The sequences do not form a connected "story" but are short examples of social interaction which can stand entirely on their own." (Bury and Bailey: 1983, p.vi)

This flexibility, as discussed in the previous chapter, enables it to play a resourceful role for language teaching. This is because the entire onus is not on the medium and it is called upon to play a role only when its advantages facilitate the language learning process.

In the language teaching field, the danger with video materials that demand more of the medium than it is capable of providing, raises the danger of the users being disillusioned with the medium. This may result in it suffering the same fate as the language laboratory if premium is not placed on the teaching and learning principles in the production of the video materials.

V.6.111 Length of Video Text

This, as discussed in the previous chapter is crucial in relation to enhancing the learners' attention on the

verbal language. It was argued that lengthy materials decrease the learners' attention span and the chances of television's mesmerizing role taking over is greater, as discussed in Chapter Four, Section IV.5.i. Therefore, what was preferable was short sequences, which portrayed interactions in a variety of social situations and role-relationships. Because of its design format, 'Video English' is suitably designed in terms of length. It is made up of short sequences which extend from 1 to 4 minutes in the elementary levels to slightly longer sequences in the intermediate level.

The BBC materials on the other hand, are made up of 15-20 minute episodes. With the dominant story-line and the richness of the visuals, (which will be further discussed below) it would not be surprising to find that learners enjoy watching it because it is so much like a serial on television and one then wonders how much this enhances the learners' focus on the language aspects of communication?

V.6.iv Pedagogical Devices

The other recommendation for encouraging active viewing is through the inclusion of pedagogical devices. This, has not been incorporated in the video materials on the whole, which is unfortunate.

An example of the way in which these pedagogical devices could be utilised has been used in 'Follow Me to San Francisco' (BBC) which is a course about "the language and behaviour of people in the United States of America". (Hambrook: 1981, in introduction to accompanying text). It is aimed at learners who have either learnt or been exposed to either British or American English and need complete exposure in the other.

One of the ways in which this was effectively carried out was the following. After a particular dialogue had occurred, it focused on the differences in usage between American structures and the British equivalent by highlighting the particular expressions via graphics.

V.6.v Production Quality of ELT Video Material

Bevan (1986), in her review of 'Purpose-Made Video Materials for Language Teaching' uses as one of the evaluating criteria the notion that, "the video film must be of a technical standard acceptable to the habituated television viewers." Most of the ELT video material are of high technical standards which is as good as the quality of television broadcasts.

'Video English' motivates the learner by ensuring that,

"it has been filmed to the highest technical and professional standards to ensure that ... learners find the material instantly appealing and stimulating."

The criticism weighed against this achievement of professional standards is that with the resultant concentration on the visual, audio (verbal channel) may get neglected. Mackiewicz describes how this happens in 'Video English' when as a result of this high technical and professional standards,

"... actors overplay, using body language too much and bringing in emotions too heavily; also, there is frequent use of camera shots usually associated with detective films. The result is a heightening of tension, to be sure, at a price. Quite often the visual channel suggests that a sequence is meant to carry meanings over and above those expressed by the verbal transactions. In other words, the fictional potential of the visual channel becomes too powerful, jarring with the comparatively simple meanings of the verbal exchanges on the audio channel. If the audio and visual channels are not properly matched, the fictional potential of the visual channel may well become counterproductive." (Mackiewicz: 1983, p.50)

Similarly, another feature of production is the utilisation of the visual mode in the video material. It is important to ensure a closer synchronisation between the audio and the visual modes for beginners, moving onto lesser synchronisation for the intermediate to advanced learners. But this should not provide producers with the licence to incorporate aspects of the visuals that are extrinsic to the communicative interaction taking place. As was warned in Chapter Four, Section IV.5.iv.c, visuals should be essential to the pedagogical objective at hand, otherwise they end up being decorative and colourful with no pedagogical value, and even though interesting may act as a distraction to the learning task at hand.

This, unfortunately, is a feature of 'The Sadrina Project', which is set in many Southeast Asian countries. It focuses a lot of the time on the scenery of the countryside and the various areas of interest in the various countries - with voice-overs providing documentary information on the tourist spots. This makes it ideal as a marketing device for attracting tourists to Southeast Asia but one wonders how much of it contributes to the learning of English?

An example is taken from Episode 3. Here, through a voice-over, David Forster says,

"In fact it was the end of my second day on the island and I was beginning to appreciate the beauty of the countryside." This comes on with the haunting background music of a traditional musical instrument, followed by spectacular scenery of the padi-fields and hill slopes of the island of the country scenery in Indonesia.

The whole series is peppered with instances where the aim is not to teach the language but to interest learners to various tourist spots. Granted that this series is aimed mainly at travellers (tourists and businessmen) and those who provide them with services (e.g. in hotels, restaurants etc.), but it has been basically designed as a language teaching course and this seems to have lapsed into the background on many occasions.

V.7 Tension between Learnability and the Sophisticated Production Principle

This then reminds us of one of the crucial issues in the design of video materials - the balance that should be maintained between the learnability/educational principle and the sophisticated production principle.

If it is the latter that is concentrated on, then we get

'good television' but not necessarily good teaching materials.

The principle of learnability through planning the teaching and learning principles in the EIL context could be enhanced through the incorporation of instances of miscommunication, pedagogical devices, clear stopping points etc. All these recommendations would mar glossy productions in the eyes of producers. But we must remind ourselves that the learners are using the materials to learn English. If they can find it interesting, while they learn all the better, but the interest/entertainment factor should not take precedence over the learning factor.

V.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, it cannot be sufficiently emphasised that what is important is for video materials to be produced with a premium placed on pedagogic principles. As Bates had strongly advocated in Chapter Three, in the design of television materials, the teaching and learning principles should be considered at every stage of the production, to ensure that there is a harmonious relationship between the medium and the message which will contribute to a conducive learning environment.

Having dealt with the critical analysis of the sociocultural and design features of the video materials, we will now move onto eliciting learners' attitudes towards the sociocultural content features of the video materials. This will be carried out through questionnaires and will be described in the research methodology of the next chapter.

The questionnaires focused on the sociocultural content features. It did not include the design aspects of the video materials, such as the length of video text, synchronisation between audio and visual channels, nature of the interactions and the inclusion of pedagogical devices.

It was felt that these were aspects that were beyond the knowledge sphere of the respondents to access their opinions through questionnaires. If at all these issues were to be investigated via the respondents, they should only be researched into after the respondents have been exposed to a different variety of design features in ELT video materials in a pedagogical context for a period of time. After that, through questionnaires and interviews, respondents' opinions could be obtained on the various design features. This will be discussed further in Chapter Nine, Section IX.6.ii, in the suggestions for

future research.

On the other hand, the sociocultural features are aspects that are embedded in the sociocultural context of language use which affect learners directly, and which they have knowledge of given the more general nature of the applications.

Chapter Six: Questionnaire Elicitation of Learners' Responses to Sociocultural Issues in Existing and Potential ELT Video Materials

VI.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the various socioculturally based research questions that have emerged from the previous chapters (especially Chapters One, Two and Four) will be investigated through the use of questionnaires.

As has been discussed in Chapter Four, it is the socioculturally based issues that are dealt with via the questionnaires and not the design features perspective because of the knowledge and experience limitation regarding the latter on the part of the students. It is possible to elicit students' attitudes and reactions to the various sociocultural features as these relate directly to the role of English from the Malaysian perspective. As a result, it involves issues related to the everyday use of language, as well as language issues which students have been exposed to via the media-newspapers, magazines as well as the television.

On the other hand, the design features are of a more specialised nature and as such awareness and knowledge of

the various design features would come about through exposure to a range of ELT video materials. The respondents in this research have only had a limited exposure to ELT video materials and that is via 'Video English' (MacMillan and British Council).

The sociocultural research questions focused on are based on the sociocultural criteria which emerged in Chapter Four - for example, the participants, settings and the speech varieties used in ELT video materials. The selection of these features is dependent on the role of English as well as the function of the language in a particular context - in this case, being the role of English as an International language in a Malaysian context, an issue which has been discussed at length in Chapters One and Two.

It is only by embedding the sociocultural research questions in the above context that we can "provide a reasoned basis for the subsequent process of syllabus design, materials writing and classroom teaching and evaluation." (Hutchinson and Waters: 1987, p.21) The information obtained will help solve the problem of the sociocultural decisions that will need to be made for ELT instructional materials - in this case, involving Malaysian learners of English as an International

language. This was the very problem raised in Chapter Two, Section II.4 and Chapter Four, Section IV.3.iv.a, that is, the lack of and the need for a clear delineation of sociocultural contexts, given the international role of English in various countries in the world, with a focus on Malaysia.

Because this research attempts to delineate the sociocultural issues from the Malaysian perspective, it may be construed as having restricted applicability. Thus, the next section argues a case for the wider applicability of the findings.

VI.2 Applicability of Findings

The respondents of this research are learners of the 'Communication Skills' course at the Language Centre of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. This course uses as resource, a video package titled 'Video English' (MacMillan and British Council). Even though this research is specifically based in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in the Malaysian context, it has recommendations which can be applied in the ASEAN region. Given the similarity in the various contextual characteristics, it is possible to transfer information from this particular case study to other contexts.

Guba, a well-known advocate of the naturalistic approach to research supports this. He says,

"The naturalist does not attempt to form generalizations that will hold in all times and in all places, but to form working hypotheses that may be transferred from one context to another depending on the degree of 'fit' between the contexts." (Guba: 1981, p.81)

The degree of 'fit' in the region would be essentially the common function that English plays as an international language - a means of communication between persons who speak varying languages in the ASEAN region. Therefore, given the parallels that can be drawn between the social and functional needs of English in the various countries, a parallel application can be made of the findings of this research, both sociocultural and design perspectives (with adaptations where necessary) for the production of ELT video materials for the ASEAN region generally.

As stated earlier, the sociocultural aspects of this research, which have been explored via the content analysis in the previous chapter, will in the next chapter be further explored via questionnaires. It is therefore essential to justify the selection of the questionnaire as

a research tool.

VI.3 Justification for Selection of Questionnaire as a Research Tool

The broad overall objective of this research is to investigate the appropriateness of ELT video materials for EIL language learners. This would involve eliciting information of a general nature, that is, the teachers' and learners' attitudes to the role of English for Malaysian language learners and information of a more specific nature, involving, the sociocultural features of English language teaching video materials, focusing specifically on 'Video English' and potential video material.

To add credibility to the suggestions and recommendations that would emerge from the research findings, it is necessary to obtain the reactions and attitudes to the various sociocultural issues from a large number of respondents. The questionnaire is well suited to such a task and it therefore formed the basic means of obtaining information for this research.

"Surveys by questionnaires have a number of advantages. The questionnaire brings in a lot of

information quickly, large numbers can be approached and if the questionnaire has been well-designed, analysis is comparatively easy." (Nisbet and Entwistle: 1970, p.44)

The first two criteria were essential for this research- the ability to obtain information quickly from a large number of respondents. But, it is important that the information obtained be relevant and useful for the sociocultural decision-making that has to take place. For this to happen, the questionnaire has to be well-designed, meaning that a number of factors essential to questionnaire design have to be considered. These broadly comprise the following main factors:

- i. a justification of areas covered in the questionnaire
- ii. the design and wording of the questions
- iii. the arrangement / order of the questions

The first factor will be covered later in Section VI.4.iv: Justification of Areas Covered in Questionnaire.

The second factor, that is, the design and wording of the questions is most basic and crucial to the entire process of credible information collection. It involves criteria such as the following which have been considered in this

research:

- a. clarity of wording and conceptual ideas in the questions
- b. the use of simple language
- c. caution against ambiguous questions
- d. caution against leading questions

(Moser and Kalton: 1977)

The third general criteria of the order of the questions is important because the sequence of questions can lead to one question influencing the answers to other questions. The manner in which this has been approached will be discussed in Section VI.4.iii.

There is no easy method in adhering to the above criteria. They cannot be guaranteed but as close an approximation should be attempted through a process of piloting the questions. As Moser and Kalton say, "... more than anything else, ... pilot studies .. are the essence of a good questionnaire. (Moser and Kalton: 1977, p.348)

VI.4 Brief Account of the Piloting of Questionnaires

Questionnaire A was piloted intermittently over a period of three months. The piloting was carried out with:

- i. twenty Malaysian students at the Richmond-upon-Thames College.
- ii. approximately twenty Masters ESOL students at the Institute of Education
- iii. five research students and four staff members at the ESOL Dept., Institute of Education.

Piloting of questionnaires should ideally be carried out with persons who are culturally and experientially similar to the actual research population. Since it was not possible for the researcher to conduct the piloting sessions in Malaysia, it was instead conducted on 20 Malaysian students at the Richmond-upon-Thames college. This group of students were similar in age to the target population and had grown-up in similar sociocultural environments. They had been in England for only three months, so they had not been exposed for very long to the different sociocultural environment.

The first two piloting sessions were conducted as follows: The questionnaires were completed by the respondents, after which the questionnaire was worked through question by question with the respondents providing the necessary feedback. The third session was conducted on an individual basis. The respondent on a one-to-one basis with the researcher went through the questionnaire and the

respondent provided the necessary criticism and comments. The feedback on the whole was extremely useful. The Malaysian students were able to provide the feedback on both the nature of the language used as well as the conceptual ideas in the questions that were unclear and ambiguous and therefore needed rephrasing to make more explicit. The feedback from the research students and the staff members was invaluable as they were extremely critical in their comments based on their own experience of questionnaire design. This helped in the process of eliminating as far as is possible in questionnaire design, questions which were ambiguous and leading in nature.

As defined by Oppenheim: 1973, p. 59, "leading questions are so worded that they are not neutral: they suggest what the answer should be or indicate the questioner's own point of view." Examples given are "Most people nowadays believe in racial integration, do you?"; "Are you against giving too much power to the trade unions?" Given that this research is largely an attitudinal one which aims to obtain respondents' views on a number of sociocultural issues, it may seem that some of the questions may potentially lead the respondent in a certain direction. The researcher however was aware of this and made every attempt at incorporating both favourable and unfavourable statements regarding most variables that seemed

potentially to be problematic in nature.

VI.4.i Format of Questions

Originally, the questionnaire was made up of both closed and open questions. After the piloting sessions, the questionnaire adopted a more closed format. There were three reasons for this.

The first rose after the piloting of the original questionnaire which included a number of open-ended questions. One of the main criticisms of respondents filling in the open-ended questions during the piloting sessions was that it took too much time and effort to complete the questionnaires. It was then decided that this factor could cause the respondents to answer the questionnaire with reluctance and this could affect the responses given.

The second reason was that all in all the respondents had to respond to questionnaires on two separate occasions-questionnaire A was administered twice, with a gap of a month in between. (This was to facilitate the test re-test method which will be discussed in greater detail in Section VI.5). This was a considerable demand to place on a particular population of respondents. Thus, it was felt

that if the questionnaire had only closed questions it would provide an environment in which respondents could answer the questions with reasonable demands made on their time and effort.

From the researchers' perspective, a third reason for the exclusion of open-ended questions, is that they usually result in a mass of free data to systematise and analyse. With the large number of respondents (approximately 489) involved, it was felt that this would have been an impractical task to complete, given the constraints of time.

Even though in the end it was decided to use closed questions, the open ended questions used in the initial stage of questionnaire design were useful because they provided the input for the various stems necessary for the closed questions. This to a certain extent provided an opportunity for respondents to react to answers to be expected and also helped to reduce the loss of information that closed questions are normally criticised for.

VI.4.11 Translated Questionnaires

The questionnaires for the students were translated into Bahasa Malaysia. This was because these students were

registered for the English language courses and thus their proficiency in the language was weak. The translated questionnaires were later checked by two persons, who were equally proficient in both Bahasa Malaysia and English to ensure that the translated version was equivalent in meaning to the original questionnaire.

VI.4.iii Arrangement / Order of Questions

Question-order is crucial to help maintain the validity of information obtained. This is because certain questions placed early in the questionnaire can influence respondents' responses to other later questions dealing with different variables.

Thus to overcome the above potential problem, the question order adopted was based on the "funnel sequence" approach. (Oppenheim: 1973, p.39) The funnel approach is so named because it starts with broad questions and then narrows down to questions which deal with more specific issues. These, then, lead onto direct questions which were designed to elicit possible reasons for the respondents' views on certain issues. This is delineated visually in the diagram below:

Funnel Sequence of Questions

Broad questions

Role of English - Function of English

Specific Issues

Sociocultural Contexts

Interactors

Pedagogical Model of Speech

Reasons for Resp.'s

Views on Choice of:

Sociocultural Contexts

- British, Malaysian,

Multi - Soc. Settings

VI.4.iv Justification of Areas Covered in Questionnaire

In line with the above, the questionnaires were made up of broad, general questions which provided the framework for questions which dealt with more specific sociocultural issues.

The broad framework was delineated via questions that dealt with students' and teachers' perceptions of the role

of English, which had implications for the decisions to be made on specific sociocultural issues.

Respondents had to react to the questions and statements on an attitude continuum which ranged across the following:

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = uncertain
4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

The questions will be discussed with reference to the numbering provided in the questionnaire proper. The questionnaire is attached in the Appendix.

Role of English

In terms of the role of English, Question 6 initially investigated students' and teachers' perceptions regarding:

- i. the international role of English - as a means of communication between non-native speakers who do not share a common language, e.g. between a Malaysian and a Japanese, as well as a language to be used as a means of communication between native and non-native speakers of English, e.g. between a Malaysian and a

British person;

- ii. a means of intra-national communication among Malaysians.

English has had British colonial associations in Malaysia - the mother tongue of the native speaker and thus solely associated with the native speaker. With the passing of years, English has gradually and predominantly acquired an international role. Thus, it was pertinent to find out learners' attitudes towards this prominent international role - a means of communication between not only native speakers but also non-native speakers.

The variable regarding English as the language to be used as a means of communication among Malaysians, e.g. between the Malays and the Chinese was introduced because of the dichotomy that seems to exist in Malaysia between official policies regarding language use and the actual, practical use of language as a means of communication among Malaysians. (This was discussed in Chapter One, Section I.4.iv) Thus, it was important to find out what the respondents, who are both Malays, (the dominant racial and political group in Malaysia, whose mother-tongue Bahasa Malaysia is the national language of the country) and non-Malays (Chinese and Indians), perceive the role of English

to be in Malaysia.

This issue of the role of English as an international language was further explored by a direct question (Question 8), which asked the respondents their opinion about English as a language - is it perceived as a language that is the exclusive property of the native speakers or is it perceived as an international language-used as a means of communication between persons from different countries who do not have a common language? This was to help the researcher ascertain respondent's perception and awareness regarding the international role of English versus the historical association it has had with Malaysia.

Given the varying roles of English, as an international language, intranational language and language of the native-speakers, it was necessary to contextualise the implications of the above for materials development directly, in this case, in relation to the selection of sociocultural contexts. This will be carried out by relating learners' attitudes to the broad issues to that of specific sociocultural issues. The former will be investigated via the questions which have been discussed above, while the latter will be investigated by focussing on the following specific sociocultural variables:

- a. the attitudes to the learning of English in different sociocultural contexts of present and potential video materials - i.e. the British, the Malaysian and the multi-sociocultural contexts.
- b. the attitudes towards potential interactors, which has implications for the choice of characters and situations to be incorporated.
- c. the attitudes to the nature of the pedagogical model of speech to be adopted - this has implications for the choice of characters in the design of video materials for EIL learners. (This was discussed in Chapter One, Section I.6).

The various variables will be discussed in turn.

Attitudes to the learning of English in different sociocultural contexts

Most of the existing ELT video materials are largely set in British sociocultural contexts. Therefore, as repeatedly stated, especially in Chapter Four, it is important to investigate learners' attitudes towards the specific sociocultural contexts - are they satisfied with it, given their perceptions of the role of English? If

they are, well and good but if they aren't then this research should attempt to delineate the alternatives available. This search for alternatives will lead us into an investigation of learners' attitudes towards Malaysian and multi-sociocultural contexts.

The questions that focus on these range from those that are direct in orientation to those that provide greater flexibility of opinion.

Question 4, which is more direct in nature, asks respondents which of the following settings of video materials would they regard as appropriate for students of the 'Communication Skills' course at UKM?

Settings of video material depicting:

- a. only British speakers in totally British settings
- b. only Malaysian speakers in totally Malaysian settings
- c. Malaysian, Asian and British speakers in a variety of settings

Question 7, provides greater flexibility by providing respondents with the opportunity of planning the sociocultural settings of a video package for language learners of the Communication Skills course at UKM. They are asked,

"Out of a total of a 100 %, what would you allot to the following:

- a. British sociocultural settings _____
- b. Malaysian sociocultural settings _____
- c. Asian sociocultural settings _____"

To provide greater credibility to the attitudes and reactions of learners to the various sociocultural issues, three additional questions were formulated, each focusing on the respondents' attitudes to the various sociocultural settings - the British, the Malaysian and multi-sociocultural settings. The learners' attitudes were obtained by formulating a number of favourable and unfavourable statements to the specific variable at hand. Question 1, which investigates learners' responses to ELT video materials set in British sociocultural contexts, has four favourable (a, b, c and d) and two unfavourable statements (e and f).

The four favourable statements revolve around issues which place English in a positive light with regards its usage - for example, learners want to learn the language because they may regard it as a prestige language and therefore it will be useful to learn it as it is spoken by the native-speakers. This is closely linked with another positive statement which says that ELT video materials should be

set in native speaker contexts because learners are interested in the culture of the British people and want to know more about the native-speakers. This would facilitate their stay in England should they aspire to further their studies there.

The two unfavourable statements deal with two varying factors. The first is a fear that some learners might have regarding English acculturation - especially given the Malaysian context where there is a tendency among some people to associate the language with Western values and culture which thus leads to the fear that they might be influenced by the Western culture.

The second unfavourable statement stems from the fact that English today is widely utilised as an international language. Therefore, it would not benefit learners to be limited to materials set only in British sociocultural settings, since a lot of Malaysia's trade and diplomatic relations is with many different countries in the world, and thus Malaysians need to interact with both non-native as well as native speakers.

Having discussed the inclusion of the various positive and negative statements regarding ELT video materials in British sociocultural contexts, it is appropriate to

investigate the other side of the coin, that is, respondent's reactions to video materials set in Malaysian multi-racial sociocultural contexts.

Question 2 is made up of three favourable (a, b and c) and two unfavourable statements (d and e). The favourable statements stem from the present predominant role of English despite government policies. English is still widely used as a social means of communication among Malaysians, especially in inter-group communication between the Malays, Chinese and the Indians. In addition, it is the predominant language used in the private sector. Given that this is the present reality, it was interesting and relevant to investigate what learners' felt about this because it had direct implications regarding their selection of sociocultural settings for ELT video materials.

One of the favourable statements stemmed from the potential of video in portraying communicative instances of cross-cultural behaviour. Given that Malaysia is made up predominantly of three different races and thus Malaysians are involved in inter-group communication and miscommunication, it would be pertinent to find out if respondents' feel that greater understanding could be reached if they learnt English set in the Malaysian ethnic

sociocultural contexts.

The negative statements were in direct contradiction to the favourable ones. Respondents were provided the opportunity to respond to statements which advocated the learning of English in British sociocultural contexts. This is due to the traditional association of English with the native speaker. The last statement stems from the contradiction that exists regarding government language policies and the real-life situation regarding English language use. In line with government policies, given that Bahasa Malaysia is the national language, the language used in the government domain as well as the medium of instruction, English should not be needed as the means of communication among Malaysians. Therefore, this is expressed in the statement that it is not necessary to have materials set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.

The final variable, Question 3, deals with respondents' attitudes to favourable and unfavourable statements regarding materials set in multi-sociocultural contexts (e.g. some sequences in Asian, some in Malaysian and some in British sociocultural contexts). The two positive statements provide respondents an opportunity to respond to the main advantages of having such material. The first is that learners will be better equipped to communicate in

international situations if they learn English set in a variety of situations - Asian, Malaysian and British sociocultural contexts. The second is that exposure to such material will facilitate the building of cross-cultural awareness and will help learners to be more tolerant and open-minded and thus better equipped to communicate in international situations.

On the other hand, the other negative viewpoint to this issue is that materials set in various sociocultural settings may be confusing and ineffective for learners.

Stemming from their reactions to the various positive and negative variables, the attitude scores of the respondents to material set in British, Malaysian and multi-sociocultural contexts will be calculated based on the Likert scale. (The procedure will be explained in detail in the Statement of Results in Chapter Seven, Section VII.4.i)

Attitudes towards Potential Interactors

Given the international role of English and the fact that potential interactors constitute an important aspect of sociocultural content, it was necessary to find out what learners' felt about a variety of potential interactors in

both social/work situations. It was felt necessary to make the distinction because potential interaction with particular persons might occur in only one of either situations. These interactors would be both native and non-native speakers ranging from British speakers to Asian speakers. It was necessary to find out learners' perceptions to specific persons with whom they may/may not have potential interaction with as these would substantiate the selection of the various sociocultural settings that respondents find satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Attitudes to Suggested Pedagogical Models of Speech for ELT Video Materials

As discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.7, it is important to investigate students' and teachers' acceptability of the pedagogical model of Malaysian speakers of English for ELT video materials. This is supported by Kachru who says,

".... in language learning, it is not only appropriate but crucial to relate the model of language to the attitudes and reactions of the actual learners." (Kachru: 1979, p.6)

Theoretical and Practical Questions on Pedagogical Models of Speech

This was investigated in two ways:

- i. by introducing a theoretical question in Questionnaire A which described the various speakers and asked respondents to judge the acceptability of these speakers as suitable teaching models for ELT video materials. (See Appendix for Question 5 in Questionnaire A)
- ii. by introducing a practical application of the above question. Samples of the various speakers, listed below, were tape recorded and this was played back to the respondents to enable them to judge the suitability of the speakers as pedagogical models for ELT video materials. (See Appendix for practical question)

Both the theoretical and practical questions were incorporated to provide a basis of comparison between students' perceptions on the issue from a theoretical perspective as well as their perceptions to actual taped representations of the theoretically described speakers. The respondents' were not told which theoretical

description of the speakers the taped samples represented because the element of objectivity had to be maintained.

It was the respondents' reactions and attitudes to various accents that were concentrated on. This was because in most of the literature on recommended pedagogical models, it is the accent that possesses the varying dimension, with regard to the particular ethnic or regional group that speaks the language.

In Malaysia because of the variety of accents that exist, given that the population is made up of three distinct ethnic groups - the Malays, Chinese and Indians, it was important to investigate how respondents reacted to the ethnic accents of the various speakers and whether they viewed them as acceptable pedagogical models for ELT video materials. As the range of ethnic accents extend on a continuum, from that of a strong ethnic accent to a fairly 'neutral' accent, it was decided to find out how learners responded to the extreme forms of the ethnic accent.

Another speaker that was focused on was the British native speaker. This was included because of Malaysia's past historical associations with the British. As a result of this, for many years any decisions that needed to be made re: pedagogical issues looked to the British native

speaker for the answers. Given the present change in situation, it was important to investigate how respondents' reacted to the British native-speaker model and to the British speaker with a local accent.

Thus, the speakers covered in the question were:

- a. an educated British English speaker with a strong local accent
- b. an educated British English speaker with a standard accent
- c. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes
- d. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes
- e. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with an Indian accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes
- f. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a 'neutral' accent, that is, an accent which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and who makes almost no grammatical mistakes

In response to a paper, "On Designing ELT Video Materials for the ASEAN Region" (Gill: 1988) presented at the

Annual Seminar of the Regional Language Centre, Singapore, it was suggested by one of the participants, Tony O'Brien, that instead of the description 'neutral' accent, the word 'unmarked' might be more suitable. This is a valuable suggestion, given that the word 'neutral', even though used in this research as depicting neither a strong native accent nor a strong non-native accent, may be regarded as misleading since accents cannot in actual sense, be neutral. Therefore, this suggestion will be borne in mind for future research but for this research for the sake of consistency with the questionnaires, it will still be the term 'neutral' that will be used.

To ensure consistency of similar material, the speakers were asked to read a short passage, titled "Tigers". (Kailasapathy: 1975, p.38) (See Appendix for Reading Passage)

This passage was chosen because of two reasons:

- i. the need for a passage of neutral yet familiar content
- ii. the need for a passage to provide sufficient variation in pronunciation and accent.

The respondents answering the question, were reminded not to take into consideration the speed at which the passage

was read but to concentrate instead on the pronunciation and accent of the speakers.

Having discussed and justified the selection of the various issues covered in the sociocultural aspects of the questionnaire, we now move on to the schedule of the fieldwork.

VI.5 Schedule of the Fieldwork

The fieldwork was conducted at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, when the 'Communication Skills' course which uses 'Video English' as resource material was offered in the first semester of the 1987/1988 academic session. The following is a schedule of the fieldwork:

Schedule of the Fieldwork

	Teachers	Students
Questionnaire A (1st Round)	28th July	3rd - 6th August 1987
Questionnaire A (2nd Round)	3rd Sept.	7th - 10th Sept. 1987
Practical Implementation of Question 5 in Questionnaire A	16th Sept.	21st - 24th Sept. 1987

Questionnaire A was distributed to both the teachers and

students twice during the semester. The purpose of this was two-fold:

- i. to assess the reliability of the instrument

"Test-retest reliability is the oldest and most intuitively obvious method for demonstrating instrument consistency ... Readministration must occur however, within a time period during which the ability, attitude or skill cannot itself be expected to change." (Henerson et al: 1987, p.147)

A month is considered a reasonable period to have between the administration of both the questionnaires.

- ii. to provide an idea of the strength of the attitudes of the teachers and students to the main variables in Questionnaire A.

The questionnaires were distributed to the teachers before they were to the students. This was to ensure that the teachers answered the questionnaires before administering them to the students. This procedure thus eliminated any bias that might have arisen due to prior knowledge of the questionnaire content.

VI.8 Description of Research Population

Student Population for the Questionnaires

The questionnaires were distributed to the entire population of 488 students on the Communication Skills course. This was done to ensure that the statistical claims made will be supported by sufficient representation of the different variables. The student variable that was originally concentrated on was the ethnic origin. This variable was concentrated on for a number of reasons. As was discussed in Chapter One, Malaysia is a multi-racial country made up of three major races - the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians. The Malays form the dominant group and the national religion is Islam. Islam exists in both its moderate and extreme form. Thus it would be interesting to find out whether attitudes and reactions towards issues of a sociocultural nature were affected by the ethnicity of the respondent. For this research, the ethnic variable had to be divided into Malays and non-Malays because the Indian variable turned out to be too small a number (14) when compared to the distribution of the Malays (322) and Chinese (153). Thus, it was decided to deal with the Chinese and Indians as one group - the non-Malays and compare their responses with those of the Malays.

Ethnic Distribution of Student Population
(Questionnaire A)

Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percent
Malays	322	85.8
Non-Malays	167	34.2
Total	489	100

Interestingly, after the data had been analysed, it was found that the ethnic variable did not play a dominant role in the responses to the different sociocultural perspectives. There seemed to be no consistent pattern to which the researcher could attribute to ethnic variable. As a result, it was decided not to regard the ethnic variable in the discussion of results.

The possible reasons for this phenomena explained that it was not such a strange occurrence after all. Firstly, the respondents were all University students who have had a fair amount of exposure in their lives and who seemingly possess a mature attitude towards various perspectives in life. Secondly, this is a generation of students who were born after the colonial days of British rule and therefore naturally do not possess any of the anti-colonial feelings and consequently anti-native-speaker feelings that could be attributed to a generation who still remember the days

of British rule. Thirdly, it should also be mentioned that this group of respondents have had their entire schooling in the Malay-medium, and despite their cultural differences, this present multi-ethnic generation seems to possess a pragmatic approach to the English language with all its sociocultural associations. The following table presents the breakdown of the number of students for each administration of the various questionnaires. The numbers are not all the same because of the natural attrition rate due to illness, absenteeism, examination fever etc. The closer the fieldwork schedule towards the end of term, the nearer the approach of the students' end of semester examinations.

Questionnaire A (1st round) - 489 respondents

Questionnaire A (2nd round) - 436 respondents

Question 5 of Questionnaire A

Practical application - 300 students

Theoretical application - 300 students

Teacher Population for the Questionnaires

There were 28 teachers altogether and they were treated as a self-contained group because their numbers were too small to ensure a reasonable distribution of any variable. In spite of their size, the questionnaires were

distributed to them to see if their responses to the various issues reflected a general similarity or difference from those of the students.

VI.7 Conclusion

Having discussed the general issues related to the design of questionnaires as a research tool as well as justified the socioculturally-related areas covered in them, it is opportune now to move onto the next chapter.

The results obtained from the questionnaires will be presented in the following Chapter, followed by a detailed discussion of the various sociocultural issues in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Seven: Statement of Results

VII.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the statement of results from the questionnaires will be presented. The results from the learners' and the teachers' questionnaires, even though identical in format, will be presented separately, so as not to cram too much of information into each table of results.

VII.2 Presentation Format of Results

The results of the second administration of the questionnaire have been included to enable comparisons to be made of the consistency and strength of the attitudes of the respondents at different points in time. It will be remembered that there was a gap of a month between the distribution of the first and second round of the questionnaire.

In the tables, the first line of results originates from the first distribution and consequently the second line of results from the second administration.

It will be noticed that the totals of the population vary. Even though they are not identical for the different

administrations, it is still valid to compare their percentages, to provide us with a clear picture of the attitudes and reactions of the respondents to the various sociocultural issues. In addition, it will be noticed that the totals of the population for the different items in a question may vary, for example, 489 for one item and 487 for another. This is not due to a miscalculation but is due to what is described as "missing values" attributed either to a failure to respond appropriately to an item or even having accidentally missed out on an item altogether.

In this chapter, the results will be presented with comments, the function of which is to provide the appropriate link between one table and the other. The discussion and interpretation of the results will be conducted, through summaries of the results in the next chapter.

VII.3 Results on General Background Issues

Before dealing with the main variables, the learners' and teachers' attitudes and reactions to the general background issues will be presented:

- i. attitudes to the role of English for Malaysians
- ii. opinions about English as a language

- iii. opinions about potential interactors in
 - a. work situations
 - b. social situations

VII. 3.1

Table VII. 1a: Students' Attitudes to the Role of English

Question 6 : We would like to know what you regard the role of English to be for Malaysians

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. the language to be used as a means of communication between non-native speakers who do not share a common language, e.g. between a Malaysian and a Japanese	3	0.616	23	4.7	48	9.8	281	57.5	132	27.0	487	99.6
	6	1.38	26	5.9	30	6.9	258	59.4	114	26.2	434	99.7
b. the language to be used as a means of communication among Malaysians, e.g. between the Malays and the Chinese	56	11.49	189	38.80	58	11.90	163	33.3	21	4.3	487	99.8
	34	7.8	160	36.86	63	14.51	162	37.32	15	3.45	434	99.9
c. the language to be used as a means of communication between native and non-native speakers of English, e.g. between a Malaysian and a British person	8	1.63	47	9.6	49	10.0	303	62.0	81	16.59	488	99.8
	4	0.92	29	6.68	44	10.1	264	60.82	93	21.42	434	99.9

VII. 3.11

Table VII. 1b: Teachers' Attitudes to the Role of English

Question 6 : We would like to know what you regard the role of English to be for Malaysians

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. the language to be used as a means of communication between non-native speakers who do not share a common language, e.g. between a Malaysian and a Japanese	1	3.57	-	-	-	-	16	57.14	11	39.28	28	99.9
	-	-	1	3.703	-	-	16	59.26	10	37.04	27	100
b. the language to be used as a means of communication among Malaysians, e.g. between the Malays and the Chinese	4	14.28	5	17.85	4	14.28	13	46.43	2	7.14	28	99.9
	1	3.703	7	25.93	3	11.111	15	55.555	1	3.703	27	100
c. the language to be used as a means of communication between native and non-native speakers of English, e.g. between a Malaysian and a British person	1	3.57	-	-	-	-	16	57.14	11	39.28	28	99.9
	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	74.07	7	25.93	27	100

VII. 3.iii

Table VII. 2a:

Students' Opinions about English as a Language

Question 8 : What are your opinions about English as a Language?

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. it is a language that is the exclusive property of native speakers of the language - e.g. British, Americans, Australians.	22	4.498	102	20.858	56	11.451	251	51.329	58	11.86	489	99.9
	15	3.456	60	13.824	55	12.672	242	55.760	62	14.285	434	99.9
b. it is an international language - used as a means of communication between persons from different countries who do not have a common language.	1	0.204	12	2.453	18	3.680	257	52.556	201	41.104	489	99.9
	2	0.460	6	1.382	16	3.686	240	55.299	170	39.170	434	99.9

VII. 3.iv

Table VII. 2b: Teachers' Opinions about English as a Language

Question 8 : What are your opinions about English as a Language?

Variables	SD		D		U		A		BA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. it is a language that is the exclusive property of native speakers of the language - eg. British, Americans, Australians.	12	42.857	11	39.285	-	-	4	14.285	1	3.571	28	99.9
	16	59.259	8	29.629	-	-	2	7.407	1	3.703	27	99.9
b. it is an international language - used as a means of communication between persons from different countries who do not have a common language.	-	-	-	-	1	3.571	5	17.857	22	78.571	28	99.9
	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	37.037	17	62.962	27	99.9

Table VII. 3a: Students' Attitudes to Potential Interactors in Work Situations

Variables	NO		Maybe		YES		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. a native speaker from England	5	1.024	35	7.172	448	91.803	488	99.9
	6	1.382	34	7.834	394	90.783	434	99.8
b. a Thai	47	9.650	253	51.950	187	38.398	487	99.8
	30	6.912	221	50.921	183	42.165	434	99.8
c. a Japanese	43	8.811	232	47.540	213	43.647	488	99.9
	35	8.064	188	43.317	211	48.617	434	99.8
d. an American	2	0.409	56	11.475	430	88.114	488	99.9
	3	0.692	43	9.930	387	89.376	433	99.7
e. an Australian	5	1.024	59	12.090	424	86.798	488	99.9
	8	1.839	42	9.655	385	88.417	435	99.9
f. a Malaysian	133	27.254	296	60.655	59	12.090	488	99.9
	104	24.018	279	64.434	50	11.547	433	99.9
g. an Indonesian	191	39.139	274	56.147	23	4.713	488	99.9
	144	33.410	255	59.164	32	7.424	431	99.9
h. an Indian National	48	9.856	219	44.969	220	45.174	487	99.9
	44	10.138	179	41.244	211	48.617	434	99.9
i. a Singaporean	34	6.967	217	44.467	237	48.565	488	99.9
	24	5.517	191	43.908	220	50.574	435	99.9
j. a Pakistani	43	8.811	243	49.795	202	41.393	488	99.9
	35	8.045	203	46.666	197	45.287	435	99.9

Table VII. 3b: Teachers' Attitudes to Potential Interactors in Work Situations

Variables	NO		Maybe		YES		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. a native speaker from England	-	-	12	42.857	16	57.142	28	99.9
	-	-	11	40.740	16	59.259	27	99.9
b. a Thai	4	14.285	18	64.285	6	21.428	28	99.9
	2	7.407	18	66.666	7	25.925	27	100
c. a Japanese	3	10.714	14	50.00	11	39.285	28	100
	-	-	19	70.370	8	29.629	27	100
d. an American	-	-	11	39.285	17	60.714	28	100
	-	-	10	37.037	17	62.962	27	100
e. an Australian	-	-	11	40.740	16	59.259	27	99.9
	-	-	11	40.740	16	59.259	27	99.9
f. a Malaysian	1	3.571	12	42.857	15	53.571	28	100
	1	3.703	15	55.555	11	40.740	27	100
g. an Indonesian	11	39.285	14	50.006	3	10.714	28	100
	9	33.333	14	51.851	4	14.814	27	100
h. an Indian National	3	10.714	14	50.00	11	39.285	28	100
	2	7.692	13	50.00	11	42.307	26	100
i. a Singaporean	-	-	11	39.285	17	60.714	28	100
	1	3.703	8	29.629	18	66.666	27	100
j. a Pakistani	1	3.571	20	71.428	7	25.000	28	100
	1	3.846	17	63.384	8	30.769	26	99.9

Table VII. 4a: Students' Attitudes to Potential Interactors in Social Situations

Variables	NO		Maybe		YES		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. a native speaker from England	5	1.024	36	7.577	447	91.598	488	99.9
	4	0.921	35	8.064	395	91.013	434	99.9
b. a Thai	50	10.245	239	48.975	199	40.778	488	99.9
	38	8.755	226	52.073	170	39.170	434	99.9
c. a Japanese	55	11.270	217	44.467	216	44.262	488	99.9
	40	9.216	192	44.239	202	46.543	434	99.9
d. an American	4	0.819	51	10.450	433	88.729	488	99.9
	5	1.152	46	10.599	383	88.248	434	99.9
e. an Australian	4	0.821	51	10.472	432	88.706	487	99.9
	6	1.388	44	10.185	382	88.425	432	99.9
f. a Malaysian	126	25.819	289	59.221	73	14.959	488	99.9
	108	24.884	272	62.672	54	12.442	434	99.9
g. an Indonesian	189	38.729	260	53.278	39	7.991	488	99.9
	143	32.949	259	59.677	32	7.373	434	99.9
h. an Indian National	47	9.631	215	44.05	226	46.311	488	99.9
	39	9.006	191	44.110	203	46.882	433	99.9
i. a Singaporean	33	6.762	232	47.540	223	45.696	488	99.9
	26	5.990	197	45.391	211	48.617	434	99.9
j. a Pakistani	44	9.016	230	47.13	214	43.852	488	99.9
	34	7.834	201	46.313	199	45.852	434	99.9

VII. 3.viii Table VII. 4b: Teachers' Attitudes to Potential Interactors in Social Situations

Variables	NO		Maybe		YES		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. a native speaker from England	2	7.142	11	39.285	15	53.571	28	100
	1	3.703	9	33.333	17	62.962	27	100
b. a Thai	6	21.428	16	57.142	6	21.428	28	100
	1	3.703	20	74.074	6	22.222	27	100
c. a Japanese	3	10.714	15	53.571	10	35.714	28	100
	-	-	19	70.370	8	29.629	27	100
d. an American	1	3.571	12	42.857	15	53.571	28	100
	-	-	10	37.037	17	62.962	27	100
e. an Australian	1	3.571	12	42.857	15	53.571	28	100
	-	-	10	37.037	17	62.962	27	100
f. a Malaysian	3	10.714	9	32.142	16	57.142	28	100
	3	11.111	12	44.444	12	44.444	27	100
g. an Indonesian	10	35.714	14	50.000	4	14.285	28	100
	9	33.333	14	51.851	4	14.814	27	100
h. an Indian National	3	10.714	14	50.000	11	39.285	28	100
	1	3.703	15	55.555	11	40.740	27	100
i. a Singaporean	1	3.571	11	39.285	16	57.142	28	100
	1	3.703	8	29.629	18	66.666	27	100
j. a Pakistani	5	17.857	14	50.000	9	32.142	28	100
	1	3.703	18	66.666	8	29.629	27	100

Having presented the general results, we now move onto the attitude scores of the respondents towards ELT video materials set in various sociocultural contexts. This will begin with an explanation of the method of calculation of the attitude scores.

VII.4 Respondents' Attitudes towards ELT Video Material set in various Sociocultural Contexts

VII.4.i Calculation of Attitude Scores

Students' Attitude Scores towards ELT Video Materials set in different Sociocultural Contexts (British, Malaysian and multi - sociocultural contexts - comprising questions 1, 2 and 3 in the questionnaire)

Each main variable consists of a number of statements which are a mixture of favourable and unfavourable statements towards the main issues at hand. For example, in,

Question 1, there are four favourable and two unfavourable statements,

Question 2, there are three favourable and two unfavourable statements,

Question 3, there are two favourable and two unfavourable statements.

To calculate the attitude score, using the Likert Scale, the following steps, recommended by Oppenheim were taken:

1. "If we decide that a high score on the scale will mean a favourable attitude, then favourable statements must be scored 5 for 'Strongly Agree' down to 1 for 'Strongly Disagree.' Unfavourable statements must be scored 1 for 'Strongly Agree' up to 5 for 'Strongly Disagree.' Having scored each item from 1 - 5 or from 5 - 1, we next add up the item scores to obtain a total score." (Oppenheim: 1966,p.134)

The total score will represent the general attitude of the respondent to a particular variable - either the British, Malaysian or Multi-sociocultural contexts.

2. The next step dealt with the problem of presentation of the attitude scores. This was done by firstly dividing into three bands - the +ve attitude, the moderate attitude and the -ve attitude, the attitude scores over a range of the maximum and minimum scores for each question. This resulted in the following bands:

Attitudes

Questions	+ve Attitude	Moderate Attitude	-ve Attitude
Question 1 (maximum 30, minimum 5)	30 - 22	21 - 14	13 - 5
Question 2 (maximum 25, minimum 5)	25 - 19	18 - 12	11 - 5
Question 3 (maximum 20, minimum 5)	20 - 15	14 - 11	10 - 5

3. The frequency scores for each question were then categorised into the appropriate bands. This resulted in the following distribution of the attitude scores for the three main variables - the British, Malaysian and multi-sociocultural settings.

VII. 4.ii

Table VII. 5a: Students' Attitude Scores Towards ELT Video
Materials Set in British Sociocultural Contexts

Variables	Range	Frequency	%
+ve Attitude	30 - 22	93	18.096
Moderate Attitude	21 - 14	381	78.234
-ve Attitude	13 - 5	13	2.669
	Total	487	99.98

VII. 4.iii

Table VII. 6a: Students' Attitude Scores Towards ELT Video
Materials set in Malaysian Multi-Racial
Sociocultural Contexts

Variables	Range	Frequency	%
+ve Attitude	25 - 19	331	68.247
Moderate Attitude	18 - 12	148	30.515
-ve Attitude	11 - 5	6	1.237
	Total	485	99.98

VII. 4.iv

Table VII. 7a: Students' Attitude Scores Towards ELT Video Materials Set in Multi-Sociocultural Contexts

Variables	Range	Frequency	%
+ve Attitude	20 - 15	353	72.336
Moderate Attitude	14 - 11	128	26.229
-ve Attitude	10 - 5	7	1.434
	Total	488	99.98

The next statement of results deals explicitly with eliciting students' attitudes towards ELT video materials set in various sociocultural contexts.

VII. 4.v

Table VII. Bas Student's Attitudes to Appropriate Settings for ELT
Video Materials for Language Learners at Universiti
Kebangsaan Malaysia

Question 4 : Which of the following settings of video material would you regard as appropriate
for students on the 'Communication Skills' course at Universiti Kebangsaan
Malaysia?

Variables	LTA		LSA		U		A		MA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. only British speakers in	54	11.111	262	53.909	46	9.465	118	24.279	6	1.234	486	99.9
totally British settings	31	7.110	195	44.724	67	15.366	128	29.357	14	3.211	435	99.7
b. only Malaysian speakers in	31	6.365	237	48.665	68	13.963	135	27.720	16	3.285	487	99.9
totally Malaysian settings	18	4.128	189	43.348	77	17.660	142	32.568	10	2.293	436	99.9
c. Malaysian, Asian and	4	0.821	14	2.874	42	8.624	257	52.772	170	34.907	487	99.9
British speakers in a	4	0.917	26	5.963	41	9.403	249	57.110	116	26.605	436	99.9
variety of settings												

VII. 4.vi

Table VII. 8b: Teachers' Attitudes to Appropriate Settings for ELT Video Materials for Language Learners at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Question 4 : Which of the following settings of video material would you regard as appropriate for students on the 'Communication Skills' course at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia?

Variables	LTA		LSA		U		A		MA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. only British speakers in	3	10.714	17	60.714	2	7.142	3	17.857	1	3.571	28	99.9
totally British settings	4	14.814	18	66.666	1	3.703	4	14.814	-	-	27	99.9
b. only Malaysian speakers in	4	14.285	15	53.571	-	-	8	28.571	1	3.571	28	99.9
totally Malaysian settings	2	7.407	17	62.962	1	3.703	6	22.222	1	3.703	27	99.9
c. Malaysian, Asian and	1	3.571	1	3.571	-	-	16	57.142	10	33.714	28	99.9
British speakers in a	2	7.407	-	-	-	-	15	55.555	10	37.037	27	99.9
variety of settings												

After having obtained a general picture of the respondents' attitudes towards the sociocultural settings of ELT video materials (existing and potential), we move on to an analysis of respondents' reactions towards the listed possible positive and negative reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of particular sociocultural settings.

VII. 4.vii

Table VII. 9a:

Student's Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT
Video Materials set in British Sociocultural Contexts

Question 1 : Do you think video materials for teaching English
should be set in British sociocultural contexts?

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
+a. video materials set in British sociocultural contexts are useful for learners if they plan to go to England for further studies.	4	0.817	43	8.793	34	6.952	328	67.075	80	16.359	489	99.9
	3	0.688	45	10.321	25	5.733	280	64.220	82	18.807	435	99.7
+b learners are interested in the culture of the British people and want to know more about the people who speak it.	8	1.635	80	16.359	111	22.699	241	49.284	49	10.020	489	99.9
	4	0.919	50	11.494	116	26.666	237	54.482	28	6.436	435	99.9
+c English is a prestige language and it is beneficial to know more about the way of life of the British people who speak it.	24	4.907	171	34.969	70	14.314	190	38.854	34	6.952	489	99.9
	11	2.526	130	29.885	94	21.609	175	40.229	25	5.747	435	99.9
+d material set in British sociocultural contexts is necessary for the successful learning of English.	26	5.338	206	42.229	92	18.891	138	28.336	25	5.133	487	99.9
	15	3.448	155	35.632	101	23.218	149	34.252	15	3.448	435	99.9
-e those who study English as the language is used in British culture will think and behave like British people.	89	18.200	245	50.102	81	16.564	63	12.883	11	2.249	489	99.9
	63	14.516	220	50.691	85	19.585	61	14.055	5	1.152	434	99.9
-f it would not benefit learners to be limited to materials set only in British sociocultural settings, since a lot of Malaysia's trade and diplomatic relations is with many different countries in the world, and thus Malaysians need to interact with both non-native as well as native speakers.	4	0.817	24	4.907	35	7.157	286	58.486	140	28.629	489	99.9
	4	0.918	19	4.367	38	8.733	263	60.459	111	25.517	435	99.9

VII. 4.viii

Table VII. 9b:

Teachers' Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT
Video Materials set in British Sociocultural ContextsQuestion 1 : Do you think video materials for teaching English
should be set in British sociocultural contexts?

		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	Variables	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
+a.	video materials set in British sociocultural contexts are useful for learners if they plan to go to England for further studies.	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	39.285	17	60.714	28	99.9
		-	-	4	14.814	1	3.703	11	40.740	11	40.740	27	99.9
+b	learners are interested in the culture of the British people and want to know more about the people who speak it.	-	-	4	14.285	8	28.571	14	50.000	2	7.142	28	99.9
		-	-	2	7.692	6	23.076	17	63.384	1	3.846	26	99.9
+c	English is a prestige language and it is beneficial to know more about the way of life of the British people who speak it.	1	3.571	8	28.571	4	14.285	14	50.000	1	3.571	28	99.9
		-	-	3	18.518	6	22.222	16	59.258	-	-	27	99.9
+d	material set in British sociocultural contexts is necessary for the successful learning of English.	2	7.142	13	46.428	6	21.428	3	17.857	2	7.142	28	99.9
		1	3.703	15	55.555	1	3.703	9	33.333	1	3.703	27	99.9
-e	those who study English as the language is used in British culture will think and behave like British people.	3	17.857	14	50.000	4	14.285	3	10.714	2	7.142	28	99.9
		4	14.814	16	59.259	4	14.814	3	11.111	-	-	27	99.9
-f	it would not benefit learners to be limited to materials set only in British sociocultural settings, since a lot of Malaysia's trade and diplomatic relations is with many different countries in the world, and thus Malaysians need to interact with both non-native as well as native speakers.	1	3.571	2	7.142	-	-	18	64.285	7	25.00	28	99.9
		1	3.703	1	3.703	-	-	16	59.259	9	33.333	27	99.9

VII. 4.ix

Table VII. 10a: Students' Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT Video Materials set in Malaysian Multi-Racial Sociocultural Contexts

Question 2 : Do you think video materials for teaching English should be set in Malaysian Multi-racial sociocultural contexts?

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
+a. English is still used as a social means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	8	1.642	29	5.954	22	4.517	274	56.262	154	31.622	487	99.9
	3	0.692	18	4.157	30	6.928	301	69.515	81	18.706	433	99.9
+b English is the main language of communication in the Malaysian private sector. Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	6	1.226	45	9.202	34	6.952	290	59.304	114	23.312	489	99.9
	6	1.379	25	5.747	36	8.275	300	68.965	68	15.632	435	99.9
+c learners would understand each other better if they learnt English set in sociocultural contexts of Malaysian ethnic groups interacting with each other.	20	4.098	71	14.549	86	17.622	247	50.614	64	13.114	488	99.9
	12	2.758	43	9.885	77	17.701	266	61.149	37	8.505	435	99.9
-d it is not essential to set video materials in Malaysian multi-racial contexts because English is learnt best as it is used in the socio-cultural settings of British speakers.	58	11.885	269	55.122	98	20.081	55	11.270	8	1.639	488	99.9
	31	7.126	240	55.172	95	21.839	63	14.482	6	1.379	435	99.9
-e English is not needed as a means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is not necessary to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	188	38.445	244	49.897	29	5.930	19	3.885	9	1.840	489	99.9
	121	27.816	244	56.091	40	9.195	26	5.977	4	0.919	435	99.9

VII. 4.x

Table VII. 10b: Teachers' Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT Video Materials set in Malaysian Multi-Racial Sociocultural Contexts

Question 2: Do you think video materials for teaching English should be set in Malaysian Multi-racial sociocultural contexts?

		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	Variables	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
+a.	English is still used as a social means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	-	-	2	7.142	1	3.571	17	60.714	8	28.571	28	99.9
		-	-	3	11.111	1	3.703	18	66.666	9	18.518	27	99.9
+b	English is the main language of communication in the Malaysian private sector. Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	-	-	5	17.857	2	7.142	15	53.571	6	21.428	28	99.9
		-	-	2	7.407	1	3.703	21	77.777	3	11.111	27	99.9
+c	learners would understand each other better if they learnt English set in sociocultural contexts of Malaysian ethnic groups interacting with each other.	-	-	6	21.428	3	10.714	15	53.571	4	14.285	28	99.9
		-	-	3	11.111	1	3.703	20	74.074	3	11.111	27	99.9
-d	it is not essential to set video materials in Malaysian multi-racial contexts because English is learnt best as it is used in the socio-cultural settings of British speakers.	4	14.285	13	46.428	3	10.714	7	23.000	1	3.571	28	99.9
		1	3.703	18	66.666	3	11.111	4	14.814	1	3.703	27	99.9
-e	English is not needed as a means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is not necessary to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.	9	32.142	16	57.142	-	-	1	3.571	2	7.142	28	99.9
		4	14.814	20	74.074	-	-	2	7.407	1	3.703	27	99.9

Table VII. 11a: Students' Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT Video Materials set in Multi-Sociocultural Settings

Question 3 : What are your opinions about English Language Teaching Video Material set in Multi-Sociocultural Settings? (e.g. some sequences in Asian, some in Malaysian and some in British Sociocultural Contexts).

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
-a. English should be learnt as it is used by the British people set only in British sociocultural contexts.	101	20.654	298	60.940	42	8.588	47	9.611	1	0.204	489	99.9
	54	12.385	268	61.467	61	13.990	45	10.321	8	1.834	436	99.9
+b learning to interact with speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds will help make learners more tolerant and open-minded.	8	1.639	32	6.557	36	11.475	280	57.377	112	22.950	488	99.9
	3	0.691	18	4.147	46	10.599	289	66.589	78	17.972	434	99.9
+c learners will be better equipped to communicate in international situations if they learn English set in a variety of situations - Asian, Malaysian and British sociocultural contexts.	4	0.819	3	0.614	20	4.098	274	56.147	187	38.319	488	99.9
	3	0.689	8	1.839	25	5.747	279	64.137	120	27.586	433	99.7
-d seeing English being used by speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds may be confusing and ineffective for learners.	36	7.361	202	41.308	156	31.901	85	17.382	10	2.044	489	99.9
	26	5.963	186	42.660	150	34.403	70	16.055	4	0.917	436	99.9

Table VII. 11b: Teachers' Reactions to Reasons for and against ELT Video Materials set in Multi-Sociocultural Settings

Question 3 : What are your opinions about English Language Teaching Video Material set in Multi-Sociocultural Settings? (e.g. some sequences in Asian, some in Malaysian and some in British Sociocultural Contexts).

Variables	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
-a. English should be learnt as it is used by the British people set only in British sociocultural contexts.	9	32.142	17	60.714	1	3.571	1	3.571	-	-	28	99.9
	7	25.925	18	66.666	-	-	2	7.407	-	-	27	99.9
+b learning to interact with speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds will help make learners more tolerant and open-minded.	-	-	1	3.571	1	3.571	20	71.428	6	21.428	28	99.9
	-	-	2	7.407	2	7.407	17	62.962	6	22.222	27	99.9
+c learners will be better equipped to communicate in international situations if they learn English set in a variety of situations - Asian, Malaysian and British sociocultural contexts.	-	-	2	7.142	-	-	13	53.571	11	39.285	28	99.9
	-	-	3	11.111	-	-	14	51.851	10	37.037	27	99.9
-d seeing English being used by speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds may be confusing and ineffective for learners.	1	3.571	17	60.714	6	21.428	2	7.142	2	7.142	28	99.9
	-	-	16	59.259	6	22.222	4	14.814	1	3.703	27	99.9

The following aspects need to be taken into account for the design of potential ELT video packages for language learners at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia:

- i. the allocation of the various sociocultural settings
- ii. the suitability of the various English speakers (both non-native and native) as pedagogical models for ELT video material.

Fistly, the allocation of the various sociocultural settings will be dealt with. In the question, the learners were provided the opportunity to allot, out of a 100%, proportional percentages for the various sociocultural settings, which they deemed appropriate for langauge learners at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The percentages allotted by the respondents were then listed under three equal bands ranging from 0 - 100%, which resulted in: 35% and less, 36% - 65% and 65% and more.

The frequency of the percentages allotted in these three bands were then listed in the following table.

Table VII. 12a:

Students' Allocation of Sociocultural Settings for a Potential Video Package for Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Language Learners.

Question 7 : Imagine you have a chance to plan the Sociocultural Settings of a video package for Language Learners of the 'Communication Skills' Course at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia; out of a total of a 100%, what would you allot to the following:

		35% and Less		36% - 65 %		66% and More		Total	
Variables		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a.	British sociocultural settings	370	76.288	99	20.412	16	3.298	485	99.9
b	Malaysian sociocultural settings	138	28.453	306	63.092	41	8.453	485	99.9
c	Asian sociocultural settings	416	85.950	66	13.636	2	0.413	484	99.9

Table VII. 12b:

Teachers' Allocation of Sociocultural Settings for a
Potential Video Package for Universiti Kebangsaan
Malaysia Language Learners.

Question 7 : Imagine you have a chance to plan the Sociocultural
Settings of a video package for Language Learners
of the 'Communication Skills' Course at Universiti
Kebangsaan Malaysia; out of a total of a 100%, what
would you allot to the following:

Variables	35% and Less		36% - 65 %		66% and More		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. British sociocultural settings	15	55.555	10	37.037	2	7.407	27	99.9
b. Malaysian sociocultural settings	14	51.851	13	48.148	-	-	27	99.9
c. Asian sociocultural settings	23	85.185	4	14.814	-	-	27	99.9

VII.5 Respondents' Attitudes towards a Variety of Speakers as Pedagogical Models for ELT video materials

The next set of results deal explicitly with respondents' attitudes towards the suitability of the various speakers as pedagogical models for ELT video materials. As discussed in Chapter Six, Section VI.4.iv.d, this question is made up of a theoretical and a practical aspect.

The first two lines are the respondents' reactions to the first and second administration of the question. The third line is made up of the respondents' attitudes towards the practical version of the question, which is the reaction of respondents' to the taped samples of speakers who were representative of the various descriptions listed in the theoretical question.

VII. 9.1

Table VII. 13a: Students' Attitudes towards a Variety of Speakers as Suitable Teaching Models for ELT Video Material

Variables	LTS		LSS		U		S		HS		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. an educated British English speaker with a strong local accent.	158	32.377	271	55.532	32	6.557	24	4.918	3	0.614	488	99.9
	111	25.517	255	58.620	40	9.195	25	5.747	4	0.919	435	99.9
	263	72.853	83	22.991	6	1.662	7	1.939	2	0.554	361	99.9
b. an educated British English speaker with a standard accent.	1	0.205	7	1.437	12	2.464	299	61.396	168	34.496	487	99.9
	1	0.229	6	1.379	13	2.988	277	63.678	138	31.724	435	99.9
	21	5.817	98	27.146	62	17.174	93	25.761	87	24.099	361	99.9
c. an educated Malaysian who speaks with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	19	3.893	181	37.090	75	15.368	190	38.934	23	4.713	488	99.9
	14	3.211	163	37.385	50	11.467	188	43.119	21	4.816	436	99.9
	8	2.216	123	34.072	42	11.634	172	47.645	16	4.432	361	99.9
d. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	29	5.942	222	45.491	90	18.442	135	27.663	12	2.459	488	99.9
	17	3.899	197	45.183	65	14.908	149	34.174	8	1.834	436	99.9
	8	2.216	71	19.667	47	13.019	179	49.584	56	15.512	361	99.9
e. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with an Indian accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	28	5.725	225	46.012	91	18.609	133	27.198	12	2.453	489	99.9
	15	3.440	200	45.871	66	15.137	150	34.403	5	1.146	436	99.9
	27	7.479	202	55.955	60	16.620	68	18.836	4	1.108	361	99.9
f. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a 'neutral' accent which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and one who makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	4	0.817	20	4.089	30	6.134	229	46.830	206	42.126	489	99.9
	4	0.917	17	3.899	27	6.192	227	52.064	161	36.926	436	99.9
	6	1.662	31	8.587	38	10.526	173	47.922	113	31.301	361	99.9

Key : Each category: Top Numerical Rows = Data from Theoretical Question.
Bottom Numerical Row = Data from Practical Taped Exercise.

VII. 5.11

Table VII. 13b: Teachers' Attitudes towards a Variety of Speakers as Suitable Teaching Models for ELT Video Material

Variables	LTS		LSS		U		S		HS		Total	
	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z	N	Z
a. an educated British English speaker with a strong local accent.	11	40.740	14	51.851	-	-	2	7.407	-	-	27	99.9
	8	30.769	16	61.538	-	-	2	7.692	-	-	26	99.9
	19	76.00	3	20.00	-	-	1	4.00	-	-	23	100
b. an educated British English speaker with a standard accent.	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	46.428	15	53.571	28	99.9
	-	-	2	7.407	-	-	8	29.629	17	62.962	27	99.9
	-	-	4	16	-	-	6	24.0	15	60.0	23	100
c. an educated Malaysian who speaks with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	4	14.814	16	59.259	1	3.703	5	18.518	1	3.703	27	99.9
	2	7.407	21	77.777	1	3.703	3	11.111	-	-	27	99.9
	5	20.00	11	44.0	5	20.0	4	16.0	-	-	23	100
d. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	4	14.814	18	66.66	1	3.703	3	11.111	1	3.703	27	99.9
	2	7.407	21	77.777	1	3.703	3	11.111	-	-	27	99.9
	2	8.0	9	36.0	2	8.0	12	48.0	-	-	23	100
e. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with an Indian accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	4	14.814	18	66.666	1	3.703	3	11.111	1	3.703	27	99.9
	2	7.407	21	77.777	1	3.703	3	11.111	-	-	27	99.9
	10	40.0	4	16.0	7	28.0	3	12.0	1	4.0	23	100
f. an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a 'neutral' accent which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and one who makes almost no grammatical mistakes.	1	3.571	1	3.571	-	-	7	25.0	19	67.857	28	99.9
	-	-	1	3.703	1	3.703	10	37.03	15	55.555	27	99.9
	-	-	2	8.0	1	4.0	11	44.0	11	44.0	23	100

VII.6 Conclusion

Having presented the results of the various aspects of the questionnaires, the next chapter will summarise pertinent aspects of the results for a detailed discussion of the respondent's attitudes towards the various sociocultural issues and the implications for the production of video materials for learners of English as an International language.

Chapter Eight: Discussion of Results

VIII.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results from the questionnaires will be discussed in greater detail to illuminate the general and specific objectives of this investigation, which stem from the basic issue of assessing the sociocultural appropriateness of video materials for learners of English as an International language.

The function of the previous chapter was mainly to present the results in tabular form. This chapter will take it a step further and discuss the implications of the results to the research objectives in greater detail.

VIII.2 Format of Presentation of Results

To facilitate the flow of information, the presentation and discussion of results will be carried out by condensing pertinent aspects of results first presented in Chapter Seven. The condensed version of the results will be presented in Summary Tables. The results will comprise those that depict a large percentage of the majority that feel strongly on a certain issue. On the other hand, in instances where there is not such a clear majority on an

issue, then both the percentages will be listed - those in favour of and those not in favour of a particular issue. The learners' and teachers' results from the first distribution of Questionnaire A will be listed in the same table to ease comparison. The learners' results will be in the top line and the teachers' results in the line below.

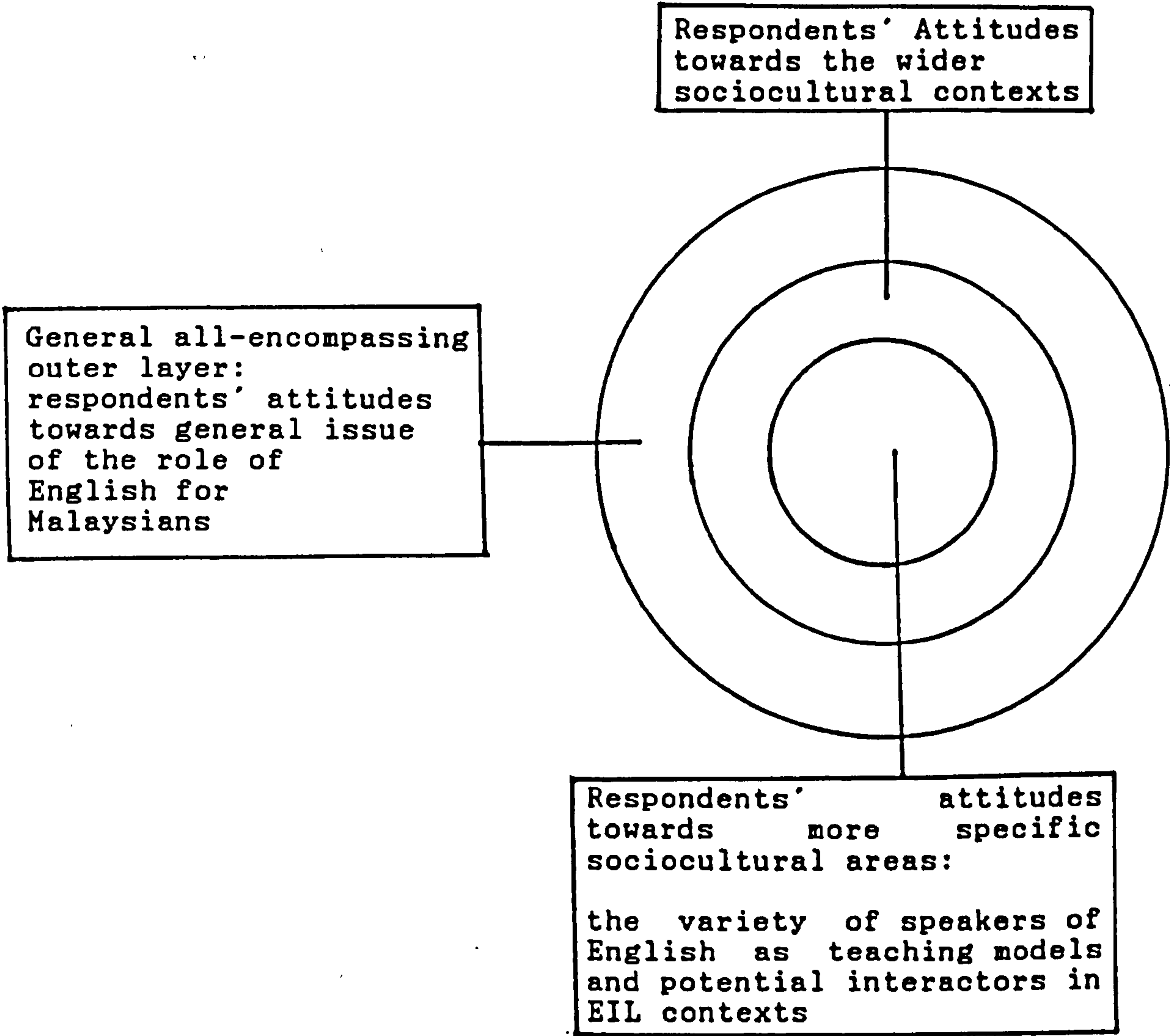
The results of the second distribution have not been included in the summaries as their main purpose was, as discussed in the previous chapter, to provide a picture of the strength and consistency of the respondents' attitudes. Judging from the statement of results in the previous chapter, there does not seem to be major differences in the results stemming from the two administrations, thus depicting the strength and consistency of the respondents' attitudes towards the various issues, bearing in mind that there was a gap of a month between the two administrations.

VIII.3 Relationship between Questionnaire Data and Research Objectives

As the research moves full circle, it is pertinent at this stage to reemphasise the relationship between the objectives of the research and the quantitative data

obtained. For a start, the discussion of results from the questionnaires can be looked at as a series of concentric circles, as seen in the diagram below.

Figure VIII.1: Relationship between Concentric Circles Encompassing Socioculturally-based Research Issues



In Figure VIII.1, each concentric circle is not an entity in itself but plays a dominant role in influencing the other, especially the outermost circle - which acts as the all-encompassing outer layer which shades into and influences the inner two concentric circles. This deals with more specific issues.

This parallels the 'funnel sequence' question lay-out which was adopted in the questionnaire design. (See Chapter Six, Section VI.4.iii) Just as the questionnaire initially covered general areas, before moving onto the specific areas, the concentric circles too are made up of research questions dealing with general issues of the role of English for Malaysians (circle 1) to the more specific sociocultural issues revolving around the attitudes and reactions towards, as well as the selection of the sociocultural settings (circle 2). The innermost circle (circle 3) comprises respondents' attitudes and reactions towards the suitability of a variety of speakers of English as teaching models and towards potential interactors in EIL contexts. All of these will have valuable implications for the decision-making involved in the sociocultural content of instructional materials. The discussion of results will also parallel the approach adopted above, starting with the important all-encompassing issue of

the role of English as an International and Intranational language.

VIII.4 Attitudes to Role of English as an International
 and Intranational language

VIII.4.i Summary Results of Tables VII.1 a/b
 The Role of English for Malaysians

Variables	Agree	Disagree
a. the language to be used as a means of communication btw. non-native speakers who do not share a common language, e.g. between a Malaysian and a Japanese	84.5 96.4	
b. the language to be used as a means of communication among Malaysians, e.g. btw. the Malays and the Chinese	37.8 53.6	50.3 32.13
c. the language to be used as a means of communication btw. native and non-native speakers of English, e.g. btw. a Malaysian and a British person	78.6 86.4	

In the summary results of Tables VII.1 a/b, (stemning from Question 6), the majority of the students regard English as the means of communication between non-native speakers who do not share a common language, e.g. between a Malaysian and a British person (78.6%). Similarly, the

majority of the teachers (96.4%) just as strongly regard the role of English to be the means of communication between non-native speakers who do not share a common language. In line with the above perceptions, it is clear that respondents regard English as an International language - used as a means of communication between people from different countries who do not possess a common language.

The second variable - the language to be used as a means of intranational communication among Malaysians e.g. between the Malays and the Chinese - does not provide such clear-cut results. Just about half the student population, (50.3%), and a lesser percentage of the teachers (32.13%), clearly disagree with English being the means of communication among Malaysians. This reaction is in line with the government's aspirations to promote Bahasa Malaysia as the national language and the language to be used for communication among Malaysians.

But, unfortunately, in the Malaysian situation, matters pertaining to language policies and the actual language use are not simple and straightforward. This is reflected by the students' and teachers' reactions to the language issue. Just as half the student population are in disagreement with the use of English as a language of

communication among Malaysians, half the teacher population (53.6%) are in agreement with the statement.

This contradiction in the learners' and the teachers' responses can be explained by the historical background of the country (the British being the ex-colonial masters) and consequently the predominant role that English has played in Malaysia for many years before the switch to Bahasa Malaysia. Over half of the teachers' (53.6% are in agreement) seem to reflect the opinion of the older generation who have had a longer link with the English language as compared to Bahasa Malaysia. The students' on the other hand belong to the younger generation who have had a stronger relationship with Bahasa Malaysia, given that it is the mother tongue of the majority of the respondents and they have also been through the educational system which entirely uses Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction.

In addition, it must be mentioned that this contradiction between students' and teachers' responses can be paralleled to the inherent contradiction that exists between government language policies and the role of English in the private sector. Despite the government's official stand regarding Bahasa Malaysia which is now the national and official language of the country, and its

various attempts at inculcating a greater use of it, the private sector still uses a fair amount of English in their workings of business and industry. This, as discussed in Chapter One, is because of the fact that English is a medium of international communication and it is absolutely necessary for trade and industry to flourish without communicative obstacles. As things stand, there is legislation that governs the use of the national language in the government (public) sector but nothing as yet exists in the private sector apart from governmental persuasion.

Having established that the majority of the respondents clearly perceive English as an international means of communication, it was still pertinent to explore the issue further, given its importance as a communication tool.

This was carried out through the inclusion of another question (Question 8) which elicited their opinion about English as a language of international communication. This question was included to provide a basis for comparison to a later more specific question, that is, respondents' attitudes towards the sociocultural settings of video materials especially those set in entirely British sociocultural contexts. This would enable us to find out whether they associated English with the native

speakers, as traditionally has been or do they perceive it as a language that is associated with a wider spectrum of speakers, inclusive of non-native speakers.

VIII.4.ii Summary Results of Tables VII.2 a/b

 Respondents' Opinions about English as a Language

Variables	Disagree	Agree
a. it is a language that is the exclusive property of native speakers of the language - e.g. British, Americans, Australians	25.4 82.1	63.2 17.9
b. it is an international language: used as a means of communication between persons from different countries who do not have a common language		93.7 96.4

It is clear from the Summary Results of Tables VII.2 a/b, that both the learners' and teachers' are strongly aware of the role of English as an International Language (93.7%) and (96.4%) respectively - a means of communication between non-native as well as native speakers. The point of departure in the results is that whereas the teachers, as a natural consequence, do not perceive English as a language that is the exclusive property of native speakers of the language (82.2%), a number of the learners (63.2%), still regard English as a language that is the exclusive property of the native speakers of the language - e.g. British, Americans,

Australians.

This perception, even though initially surprising is understandable because even though there is the awareness and the use of English as a means of communication between non-native speakers of the language, it is still a relatively newly discussed phenomenon (when compared with the traditional association that English has with native speakers) that has not been given sufficient prominence by the non-native speakers themselves. On the other hand, English and its ties with the native speakers of the language, has been and is still given the most prominence in these non-native countries, - for example, in the form of media coverage (television and the cinema), in the form of English language teaching video materials, in the form of the British Council and in the form of native-speaker consultants, whether in the field of English language teaching or other subject areas. Therefore, the exposure to English of these respondents who are University students, is limited to the above. Moreover, these students themselves, have not yet had occasion to use English as a means of communication between non-native speakers from other countries but have mainly used the language as a means of communication for inter and intra-group communication in Malaysia, the latter applying mainly to the Chinese and Indians.

The above attitude is again reflected in the learners' opinions about their potential interactors in work and social situations, when they leave the University. This issue, even though of a more specific nature and belonging to the inner circle 3 (refer Figure VIII.1), when viewed from the perspective of the three concentric circles, will be discussed at this point to facilitate the flow of the discussion.

VIII.5 Attitudes to Potential Interactors in Work and Social Situations

VIII.5.i Summary Results of Tables VII.3 a/b and VII.4 a/b

Native Speakers

		No	Maybe	Yes
i.	a native speaker from England	Work	-	81.8
			42.9	57.1
	Social	-	-	81.6
			39.3	53.6
ii.	an American	Work	-	88.1
			39.3	60.7
	Social	-	-	88.7
			42.9	53.6

iii. An Australian	Work	-	-	86.8
		-	40.7	59.3
	Social	-	-	88.7
			42.3	53.6

The native-speaker (British, American or Australian) is regarded as someone with whom interaction in English is a strong possibility in the future - on the whole, the majority of both the students' and teachers' feel this way.

On the other hand, for the non-native speakers (Thai, Japanese, an Indian national, a Singaporean and a Pakistani), just over 40% feel that there is a possibility that these will be their potential interactors in the future.

VIII.5.ii Summary Results of Tables VIII.3 a/b and VIII.4a/b

Non-Native Speakers

		No	Maybe	Yes
i. a Thai	Work	-	51.9	38.4
		-	64.3	21.4
	Social	-	48.9	40.8
		-	57.1	21.4

ii.	a Japanese	Work	-	47.5	43.6
			-	50.0	39.3
		Social	-	44.5	44.3
			-	53.6	35.7
iii.	an Indian national	Work	-	44.8	45.2
			-	50.0	38.3
		Social	-	44.1	46.3
			-	50.0	38.3
iv.	a Singaporean	Work	-	44.5	48.6
			-	39.3	60.7
		Social	-	47.5	45.7
			-	39.3	57.1
v.	a Pakistani	Work	-	48.8	41.4
			-	71.4	25.0
		Social	-	47.1	43.8
			-	50.0	32.1

A large number of the learners' are as yet uncertain about the non-native speakers' roles as potential interactors in English. As discussed previously, they are generally aware of the role of English as an international language but given their limited exposure and experience of the use of English with specific non-native interactors, they are not certain of the non-native speakers as potential interactors. It must be pointed out though that even though they personally perceive that interaction with non-

native speakers will be uncertain, they do allocate the inclusion of Asian sociocultural contexts in the production of ELT video materials for language learners in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, as will be discussed later.

VIII.5.iii Summary Results of Tables VII.3 and VII.4 a/b

Indonesian and Malaysian Speakers

		No	Maybe	Yes
i.	a Malaysian			
	Work	27.3	60.7	12.1
		3.6	42.9	53.6
	Social	25.8	58.2	14.9
		10.7	32.1	57.1
ii.	an Indonesian			
	Work	39.1	56.1	-
		39.3	50.0	-
	Social	38.7	53.2	-
		35.7	50.0	-

It will be useful to discuss this section bearing in mind the results of respondents' attitudes towards English as a means of communication for international and intranational purposes. In contrast, with the majority in agreement with the international role of English, learners' attitudes towards the role of English as a means of intranational communication depicted a substantial percentage - (50.3%) - in disagreement with this role. On

the other hand, it is interesting that a lesser but still significant percentage (37.6%) perceive of English as a language that is needed as a means of communication among Malaysians. In contrast, the majority of teachers' are in agreement (53.6%) with the role of English as a means of communication for Malaysians.

The results regarding the Malaysian as a potential interactor in work and social situations, are similar to the above pattern of response. Here, the majority of learners were uncertain regarding the possibility of interactions with the Malaysian in work and social situations - 60.7% and 59.2% stated 'Maybe' respectively. The teachers seemed more certain of the idea of the Malaysian as a potential interactor in work and social situations - they stated 'Yes' (53.6%) for work situations and (57.1%) for social situations.

As discussed earlier, this implicit contradiction in the learners' and teachers' viewpoints can be explained by the dichotomy that still exists regarding the reality of language use in the country and the government's official language policies. Despite the government's efforts over the years of promoting Bahasa Malaysia as a national language that will also function as a means of communication between Malaysians; yet, as depicted in

Chapter One, Table I.1, English is still used as the means of communication among Malaysians and is still a language that is accorded a high priority in the private sector.

This seemingly puzzling set of figures were further unravelled by the implications of classifying all the ethnic groups as one corporate Malaysian group.

This possibly explains why the large majority of the learners listed 'Maybe' for the Malaysian as a potential interactor. This was because all the various ethnic groups had been incorporated under Malaysians and there was no distinction made of interactions among non-Malays and Malays. If the distinction had been made, then this would have most probably resulted in a different reaction. As discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.4, English is still largely used as a means of communication among the Chinese and the Indians. Therefore, if the distinction in ethnicity had been made explicit, the learners would have most probably agreed to English being the means of communication among the Chinese and Indians, whereas they would have most probably disagreed to the idea of English being the means of communication between the Malays and non-Malays.

What this seems to suggest is any research that deals with

the profile of language use in Malaysia should make a distinction in terms of language use between the Malays and the non-Malays and not regard them as a combined group. Bahasa Malaysia, being the official language of the country is the mother-tongue of the dominant Malay ethnic group. Therefore, naturally, they regard it as a means of communication for intra-national purposes. On the other hand, the non-Malays still predominantly use English as the means of communication, especially when a Chinese interlocutor interacts with an Indian and vice-versa.

The Indonesian is regarded as an uncertain and even an unlikely interactor with whom English would be used. This is natural considering that Bahasa Indonesia, the national language of Indonesia, is mutually intelligible with Bahasa Malaysia, and thus would be the likely means through which communication should be carried out between the Indonesian and the Malaysian, when they have occasion to interact.

After having established respondents' positive attitudes to the general issue of the international role of English as well as various reactions to the potential interactors in work and social situations, it is timely to move onto more direct issues about respondents' opinions of ELT

video materials set in different sociocultural contexts. Different sociocultural contexts because English is used as a means of communication between peoples of different cultural backgrounds. Therefore this is an important perspective in the decision-making that would have to take place in the production of instructional materials for learners of English as an International language. As has been discussed in Chapter Six, it is important that students are able to relate to materials they learn from. Therefore, it is important that this factor is considered seriously.

VIII.6 Attitudes to ELT Video Materials set in Various Sociocultural Contexts

The following sections discuss learners' attitudes towards existing ELT video materials set in British sociocultural contexts, which the learners have been exposed to and towards potential video materials set in Malaysian and multi-sociocultural contexts. Learners have not been introduced to materials set in multi-sociocultural contexts but it seems quite clear, given the international role and function of English in the region, there is a need for. Before considerations are made regarding their inclusion, it is important to find out respondents' perceptions of this new feature in materials production.

On the other hand, learners have been exposed to instructional text materials set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts. As was pointed out in Chapter Two, Section II.7, material designers in negating the British influence on material production have tended to swing to the other end of the pendulum by setting the materials in entirely Malaysian settings. This does not seem to be a realistic and practical move given the international role of English and the fact that Bahasa Malaysia is the national language, officially instituted and encouraged as the language of administration, education and communication. Therefore, it is also important to find out exactly what respondents' attitudes are to potential ELT video materials set in Malaysian sociocultural settings.

The next question provided respondents' with the opportunity of responding more explicitly to the various sociocultural contexts. In the questionnaire, this was included at this later stage (Question 4) so that it would not in any way influence responses to the earlier questions which attempted to elicit their responses to stated favourable and unfavourable statements towards the various sociocultural contexts. (Questions 1, 2 and 3)

VIII.6.i Summary Results of Tables VII.8 a/b

Settings of ELT Video Material that are regarded as
Appropriate for Language Learners at Universiti Kebangsaan
Malaysia

Variables	Least / Less Appropriate	Appropriate
a. only British speakers in totally British settings	65.02 71.4	
b. only Malaysian speakers in totally Malaysian settings	55.03 67.8	
c. Malaysian, Asian and British speakers in a variety of settings		87.7 92.9

In this question, it was explicitly asked which of the following settings of video material would students regard as appropriate for learners on the 'Communication Skills' course at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The learners (87.7%), like the teachers' (92.9%), agreed overwhelmingly to video materials with Malaysian, Asian and British speakers set in a variety of contexts. The learners (65.02%) and teachers' (71.4%) did not agree to video materials with only British speakers in totally British settings nor to video materials with only Malaysian speakers in totally Malaysian settings, (55.03%) and (67.9%) for learners and teachers respectively.

Respondents have made it clear that they do not agree to video materials set entirely in British sociocultural settings, 65.02% and 71.4% (learners' and teachers' respectively). This falls in line with their perceptions of English as an International language. Given that English is an international means of communication, it will be used for interaction not only with native speakers but also with non-native speakers. Materials should therefore reflect the wider spectrum of contexts in which the language will be used.

In addition their reaction to materials set entirely in Malaysian settings is especially interesting given that most locally-produced instructional materials are set in totally Malaysian contexts. It is quite clear from the above findings that, 55.03% of the learners and 67.9% of teachers, do not feel that this is sufficient, given the international role of English. There is a clear expression of disfavour of materials which focus on only one particular type of sociocultural context.

The respondents have revealed a very balanced attitude towards a variety of sociocultural settings. There is neither a total negation of British sociocultural contexts and neither a total adoption of Malaysian multi-racial sociocultural contexts to the exclusion of all else, but

the adoption of a balance of a variety of settings. This is the very principle that underlies the role of English as an International language - a means of communication between various peoples all over the world, both native speakers as well as non-native speakers. It is reassuring to note that on the part of the students, no ethnocentric nor anti-British feelings are displayed. Instead there is evidence of a mature attitude towards using English for the functions it is best suited, that is, as a means of international communication.

After having obtained the respondents' views on video material set in the different sociocultural contexts, they were provided with an opportunity to plan the allocation of sociocultural contexts for an ELT video package for UKM language learners (Question 7) to assess how this practical aspect tied in with respondents' previous reactions.

VIII.6.ii Summary Results of Tables VII.12 a/b

Respondents' Allocation of Sociocultural Settings for a
Potential ELT Video Package

Sociocultural Settings	Range of Allocation	Majority %age
British	35 % and less	76.3%
		55.5%
Asian	35% and less	85.9%
		85.2%
Malaysian	36 % - 65%	63.1%
		48.1%
	35% and less	28.5%
		51.9%

From the summary table above, it can be seen that over 75% of the respondents have allocated 35% and less to British and Asian sociocultural settings. 63.1% of learners' have allocated 36% - 65% to Malaysian sociocultural settings. Most of them have allocated a greater proportion of the sociocultural settings to Malaysian than to Asian or British settings. The teachers on the other hand, are fairly divided in their allocation of Malaysian sociocultural settings - 48.1% allot 36 - 65%, while 59.1%

allot 35 % and less.

As was discussed earlier, this does not reflect a negative feeling towards the sociocultural settings of different groups of people, but does reflect the adoption of the principle of balance, with a majority in favour of sociocultural settings most familiar to them. It is quite clear from the previous question that learners did not favour the concentration on only one sociocultural context, whether it was the Malaysian sociocultural context or the British sociocultural context. There is instead a favourable response to all three, with a greater dominance on the Malaysian context. This does coincide with a basic principle in material design - that of beginning with the most familiar, that is the Malaysian contexts and gradually extending to the unfamiliar, that is, the British and the Asian contexts.

To provide further support and credibility to the above responses, the respondent's attitudes will be calculated based on their responses to the various favourable and unfavourable statements on the various issues (as listed in the questions below). As discussed in Chapter Seven, Section VII.4.i, the attitude score was calculated using the Likert scale as recommended by Oppenheim (1973, p.134). The attitude score will comprise a positive,

moderate and negative attitude. The frequency of the respondents' scores will then be categorised according to the frequency of scores in a particular attitude band. This will provide further substantiation to the respondent's responses to the various sociocultural contexts.

VIII.6.iii Summary Results of Tables VII.5, VII.6 and VII.7

	British Sociocultural Contexts	Malaysian Sociocultural Contexts	Multi- Sociocultural Contexts
+ve Attitude	-	68.2 %	72.3%
Moderate Attitude	78.2%	-	-
-ve Attitude	-	-	-

The majority of students (78.23%) possess a moderate attitude - neither a positive nor a negative attitude score towards ELT video materials set in British sociocultural contexts, whereas a large percentage of them are in favour of potential ELT video materials set in Malaysian (68.24%) and multi-sociocultural (Asian, British and Malaysian) contexts (72.33%). This exemplifies the respondents' realisation of a need for material set in British sociocultural settings, given that the native-speaker is regarded by the majority as a potential

interactor in both work and social situations, (See Section VIII.4) but at the same time a strong awareness that this is not all they need, given the role of English as an International language.

Their positive attitude scores towards the Malaysian and multi-sociocultural contexts parallel their positive responses to the earlier questions regarding the inclusion of both these contexts for instructional material design.

Having assessed the respondents' attitudes to the specific sociocultural contexts in potential ELT video materials, the next section elicits respondents' reactions to a variety of possible positive or negative reasons for their above attitudes to the various sociocultural contexts. The listed reasons stem from issues discussed in the review of literature, as well as the answers provided by respondents involved in the pilot-testing of the open-ended questionnaire. The answers were obtained at the initial stages of the questionnaire design.

It is by assessing the relationship between the respondents' responses to the specific sociocultural contexts (dealt with in VIII.3.i, VIII.3.ii and VIII.3.iii) and their response to the following favourable and unfavourable reasons, that it will be possible to

ascertain the credibility and consistency of the respondents' overall attitudes.

VIII.7 Respondents' Responses to Reasons for and
 against ELT Video Materials set in Various
 Sociocultural Contexts

VIII.7.i Summary Results of Tables VII.9 a/b

Respondents' Responses to Reasons for and against ELT
 Video Materials set in British Sociocultural Contexts

Variables	Disagree	Agree
a. + video materials set in British sociocultural contexts are useful for learners if they plan to go to England for further studies		83.4 99.9
b. + learners are interested in the culture of the British people and want to know more about the people who speak it		58.3 57.1
c. + English is a prestige language and it is beneficial to know more about the way of life of the British people who speak it	39.9 32.1	45.8 53.6
d. + material set in British sociocultural contexts is necessary for the successful learning of English	47.6 53.6	33.5 24.8
e. - those who study English as the language is used in British culture will think and behave like British people	68.3 67.8	
f. - it would not benefit learners to be limited to materials set only in British sociocultural settings, since a lot of Malaysia's trade and diplomatic relations is with many different countries in the world, and thus Malaysians need to interact with both non-native as well as native speakers		87.1 89.3

The summary results of Tables VII.9 a/b, portrays quite clearly the positive awareness of the learners to the differing domains of application of English - for interaction with the native-speaker in the dominant group's specific environment and for interaction with other interlocutors who may each come from different sociocultural backgrounds. This is the very basic principle of EIL - the use of English as a means of communication between people from different sociocultural groups. It ties in with their responses to the previous socioculturally-related question.

Learners' (83.4%) and teachers' (89.8%) appreciate the fact that it is necessary for learners' to learn the language in British sociocultural contexts in case they need to pursue their studies in England. At the same time, the learners' (59.3%) and teachers' (57.1%) express a positive attitude of being interested in the culture of the British people and wanting to know more about the native-speakers who speak it.

In Chapter Two, given the varying roles of English, there emerged a recognition of learners with divergent language learning needs -one is the general purpose student who has yet no clear indication of the precise communicative domains in which he will need English. The other is the

student who knows definitely that he/she will need the language to communicate with native speakers - either because they intend to pursue their studies abroad or through communicative needs arising from work commitments. Therefore, if it is the latter type of student that is involved, it will definitely benefit him or her to know more about the culture of the British people as it would facilitate the entire communication process with the native speaker.

Again the mature attitude of the respondents' comes across in their responses to issues of a sociocultural nature. There seems to be an awareness that it will be valuable to widen their horizons and learn more about the people and their culture. There were two possible reasons why this might be so - one, as discussed above, was that it would be useful if they planned to further their studies in that environment. The other reason provided in the questionnaire is that English is a prestige language and therefore it would be beneficial to know more about the way of life of the people who speak it.

Here is where the respondents differed in their opinions. Whereas there was wholehearted agreement with the first reason, (83.4%), a lesser number agreed with the latter- (45.8%). A fair percentage, 39.9%, did not agree with the

latter statement. This reflects an awareness on the part of the respondents' regarding the practical advantage of learning the language in that particular sociocultural context if, in future, they were to communicate in the particular environment. But it is definitely not entirely because the language is regarded as a prestige language.

There was none of the narrow-mindedness that learning the language might lead to the danger of thinking and behaving like the British people - 68.3% and 67.9% (students' and teachers' respectively) disagreed with this.

Despite the favourable responses to the positive reasons, the respondents made it very clear that it would not benefit learners to be limited to materials set only in British sociocultural settings (87.1% and 89.3%). This, as discussed earlier, is because of the wide scale of activities that English is used for - a means of communication with both non-native as well as native speakers and does tie in with respondents' inclination towards the poly-model approach in material design. This is an approach that considers the varying sociocultural contexts in which the language functions. (See Chapter Two, Section II.4.i, for a discussion of this issue.)

VIII.7.ii Summary Results of Tables VII.10 a/b

Respondents' Responses to Reasons for and against ELT
Video Materials set in Malaysian Multi-Racial
Sociocultural Contexts

Variables	Disagree	Agree
a. + English is still used as a social means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts		87.9 85.2
b. + English is the main language of communication in the Malaysian private sector. Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts		82.6 74.9
c. + learners would understand each other better if they learnt English set in the sociocultural contexts of Malaysian ethnic groups interacting with each other		63.7 67.9
d. - it is not essential to set video materials in Malaysian multi-racial contexts because English is learnt best as it is used in the socio-cultural settings of British speakers	67.0 60.7	
e. - English is not needed as a means of communication among Malaysians. Thus it is not necessary to learn it set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts	88.3 89.3	

In previous questions, (See Section VIII.5.iii and VIII.3.i), it is interesting to note that learners possessed a predominantly positive attitude (68.2%) to

English language teaching video materials set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts despite a significant number (87.9%) who had perceived of English as a language of international communication and not for intranational communication. This seeming dichotomy can be further explained by the overwhelming agreement on the part of respondents' to the above variables listed in Section VIII.6.ii, Summary Table VII.10 a/b, as possible reasons for the inclusion of Malaysian sociocultural settings.

In this question, respondents were given a list of both positive and negative statements to account for respondents' reactions to the earlier questions on attitudes towards materials set in Malaysian multi-racial sociocultural settings.

In learners' responses to the reasons provided, it is clear that they are in favour of the production of ELT video materials in Malaysian sociocultural settings. This is supported by their overwhelming agreement with the positive statements. They feel it is useful to have materials set in Malaysian multi-racial contexts because it is still the social means of communication among Malaysians. (87.9% for students and 85.2% for teachers) In addition, the majority agree that it is the main language of communication in the Malaysian private sector,

(82.6% and 74.9%)

In fact to support the above, respondents' were asked to react to the direct statement that English is not needed as a means of communication among Malaysians. The majority of students (88.3%) and teachers' (88.3%) disagreed with the above statement and this supported their previous responses and clearly placed English in still a predominant position in Malaysia.

One can make an assumption from these results that in terms of policy, the respondents recognise and accept that Bahasa Malaysia is the national language of the country. On the other hand, in terms of video material design, it is clear that they would like the inclusion of Malaysian sociocultural settings because it is a fact that English is still largely an essential means of communication in the business industry and other domains of the private sector, as well as a means of communication among Malaysian groups depending on the ethnic group and the occasion, irrespective of whether these align with government policies or not.

The seeming contradiction in respondents' responses to the various questions related to English language use in Malaysia seems reflective of the contradiction that exists

in the Malaysian situation re: government policies and exhortations regarding the official use of the National language in the country, as compared to the reality of English still playing an essential communicative role, especially among the non-Malays and in the private sector.

VIII.7.iii Summary Results of Tables VII.11 a/b

Respondents' Responses to Reasons for and against ELT video Materials set in Multi-Sociocultural Settings

Variables	Disagree	Agree
a. - English should be learnt as it is used by the British people set only in British sociocultural contexts.	81.6 92.9	
b. + learning to interact with speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds will help make learners more tolerant and open-minded.		80.3 92.9
c. + learners will be better equipped to communicate in international situations if they learn English set in a variety of situations - Asian, Malaysian and British sociocultural contexts.		94.5 92.9
d. - seeing English being used by speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds may be confusing and ineffective for learners.	48.7 64.3	19.4 14.3

A large majority of respondents (72.33%) possessed a positive attitude to ELT video materials set in multi-

sociocultural settings (some sequences in Asian, some in British and some in Malaysian), as depicted in summary results of Table VIII.5.iii. This is supported by the response of the majority of learners' and teachers' (94.5% and 92.9%) who agreed that learners will be better equipped to communicate in international situations if they learn English set in a variety of sociocultural settings - Asian, Malaysian and British sociocultural contexts. They also agreed that learning to interact with people from different sociocultural backgrounds will help make learners more tolerant and open-minded, (80.3%) and (92.9%). This of course can be no guarantee but it does tie in with the recommendations that ELT material should extend beyond teaching only language and include the educational perspectives, as discussed in Chapter Two, Section II.9. Being exposed to differences in sociocultural behaviour in various communicative events will help build up an awareness and tolerance towards variances in cross-cultural communicative behaviour. This would eventually help facilitate cross-cultural communication and lead to better relationships and lesser misunderstandings. In addition, the respondents do not feel that seeing English being used by speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds will be confusing and ineffective for them.

Having delineated the respondent's attitudes to the material set in the differing sociocultural settings, we move on to an aspect that is additionally crucial for the production of language teaching video materials - that is, learners' attitudes towards a variety of speakers as suitable teaching models.

This is an issue that has to be explored because if learners find that video materials should also be set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts, then the subsequent issue that needs to be addressed is which speakers would be suitable models to be used in the production of video materials?

As has been discussed in Chapter One, Malaysia is made up of three dominant racial groups - the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians. This coupled with the variegated history that English has had in this country has seen the development of speakers of different varieties of English - the basilect, the mesolect and the acrolect. (See Chapter One, Section 1.5 for a detailed discussion) The variety of English spoken is tied up to the educational background of the person and the socio-economic status. Therefore, in deciding on the speakers to be used in ELT video materials which focus on Malaysian sociocultural contexts, it will be essential to investigate respondent's

opinions of a sampling of Malaysian speakers who speak English with different accents tied in to the different varieties. This will enable recommendations to be made on the pedagogical model of speech for the future production of materials - both audio and visual.

In addition, the British speaker is also included in the list of various speakers. This is to provide contrast and given that most ELT video materials have British speakers in totally British sociocultural settings, it was felt necessary to include two British speakers - an educated speaker with a standard accent as well as an educated speaker with a strong local accent.

VIII.8 Students' Attitudes towards a Variety of Speakers as Suitable Teaching Models for ELT Video Material

This aspect of the research will be discussed from two perspectives - that of the theoretical question and that of the practical question, as depicted in the summary results of Tables VII.13 a/b, on the next page.

Only the majority percentages will be listed and discussed. The first line comprises the learners' majority responses, while the second comprises the

teachers', both itemised in two columns, that is the responses to the theoretical and the practical perspectives of the various speakers.

VIII.8.i Summary Results of Tables VII.13 a/b:
Respondents' Attitudes to a Variety of Speakers
as Suitable Teaching Models for ELT Video
Material

Speakers		Theoretical Majority %age	Practical Majority %age
an educated British English speaker with a standard accent	Most Suitable	95.8 <u> </u> 99.9 <u> </u>	48.9 <u> </u> 84.0 <u> </u>
an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a 'neutral' accent which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and one who makes almost no grammatical mistakes	Most Suitable	88.9 <u> </u> 92.9 <u> </u>	79.2 <u> </u> 88.0 <u> </u>
an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes	Unsuitable	40.8 <u> </u> 74.1 <u> </u>	52.0 <u> </u> 64.0 <u> </u>
an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes	Unsuitable	51.3 <u> </u> 81.5 <u> </u>	65.1 <u> </u> 48.0 <u> </u>
an educated Malaysian who speaks English with an Indian accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes	Unsuitable	51.7 <u> </u> 81.5 <u> </u>	63.4 <u> </u> 56.0 <u> </u>
an educated British English speaker with a strong local accent	Most Unsuitable	87.9 <u> </u> 92.6 <u> </u>	85.8 <u> </u> 86.0 <u> </u>

KEY
 denotes change
 no change

An explanation of the necessity of incorporating both the theoretical question and the practical question has been rationalised in Chapter Six, Section VI.4.iv.d. Suffice it at this point to reiterate that the theoretical question provided a written description of the various speakers. On the other hand, the practical question provided tape-recordings of samples of the various speakers. Respondents were asked to judge the acceptability of these speakers as suitable teaching models for ELT video materials on two separate occasions-one for the theoretical question and the other for the practical question.

Theoretical Question

On the whole, learners and teachers found the following speakers most suitable as teaching models for ELT video material:

an educated British English speaker with a standard accent - 95.9% of learners' and 99.8% of teachers' are in favour;
an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a 'neutral accent' which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and one who makes almost no grammatical mistakes- 88.9% of learners' and 92.9% of teachers' are in favour.

The following speakers were found unsuitable by approximately half the population. They were:

an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes-learners' (51.4%) and teachers' (81.5%).

an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes is also considered unsuitable by 40.9% of a population of 489 learners. It should be noted that an almost equal percentage, 43.6% of the learners found this speaker to be suitable, though the responses changed on hearing the taped transcription of the Malay speaker. The teachers were very definite in their responses - 71.4% did not regard this speaker as suitable.

an educated Malaysian who speaks English with an Indian accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes is considered unsuitable by the majority, 51.7% of learners and 81.5% of teachers.

The educated British English speaker with a strong local accent was regarded by the majority of respondents - 87.8% and 92.6% (learners' and teachers' respectively) as most unsuitable.

Having obtained a general picture of responses to the theoretical description of the various speakers, we now move onto the responses to the practical version.

The practical question gave rise to some variation in the respondents' responses to certain speakers. Respondents after listening to the actual samples of speakers decided differently on their suitability as teaching models for ELT video materials.

Practical Question

To determine whether listening to the actual taped samples of the speakers made a difference in the respondents' responses, this section will be discussed with an emphasis on the differences and similarities of responses to the practical as compared to the theoretical question.

The overall responses to the speakers with the Malaysian ethnic accents were not favourable for both the theoretical and practical questions. In fact, the response to the speaker with the Malay accent increased in terms of unsuitability, from 40.8% for the theoretical question to 52% for the practical one. The teachers' remained consistent in their response to this speaker- they found him unsuitable. The speaker with the Indian

accent was regarded as unsuitable on both counts. The percentage responses for the practical question were 63.4% and 56% for learners' and teachers' respectively.

Just over half the respondents had felt that an educated Malaysian who speaks English with a Chinese accent was not suitable - 51.3%. On the other hand, for the taped sample, the majority of the respondents, 65.1%, felt that this was suitable as a pedagogical model for ELT video material. A possible explanation for this could be because of a difference in the taped sample of the Chinese speaker. It did not reflect a speaker with a strong accent but one with a reduced ethnic accent, as opposed to the Malay and the Indian speakers who both possessed strong ethnic accents.

These results show that even though the respondents are in favour of the incorporation of a variety of sociocultural settings for ELT video materials, they are more discerning with regards the speakers they would accept as pedagogical models.

We now move on to the two speakers who were regarded as highly suitable by respondents in the theoretical question, that is, the educated British English speaker with a standard accent and the educated Malaysian with a

'neutral' accent which is neither strongly Malaysian nor strongly British and one who makes almost no grammatical mistakes.

After listening to the taped samples, the number that found the educated British English speaker suitable fell considerably, from 85.8% for the theoretical question to 49.9% for the practical question. The teachers' responses remained extremely high on both occasions, 99.8% and 84% for the theoretical and practical question accordingly.

In contrast, the responses to the educated Malaysian speaker with a 'neutral' accent remained consistently high on both counts - 88.9% and 79.2% for learners for the theoretical and practical questions respectively as well as 92.8% and 88% for the teachers.

It is obvious from the results above, that possessing a Malaysian ethnic accent does not automatically enable one to be accepted by the majority of respondents as a pedagogical model for ELT video material. The respondents themselves quite clearly express a definite preference (88.9% and 79.2%) for a pedagogical model who possesses a 'neutral' accent which is neither typically ethnically Malay, Chinese or Indian nor British, that is, belonging to the upper end of the continuum of the range of accents of Malaysian speakers of English. In Malaysia, the person

who possesses this acrolect variety of English accent can either be a Malay, a Chinese or an Indian who belongs to "the most educated and articulate speakers of English in his own linguistic group." (Brumfit: 1980, p.86)

In contrast, the educated British speaker with a standard accent was highly acceptable theoretically but after listening to the taped sample of the speaker, the percentage dropped drastically from 95.5% to 49.9%, though for the teachers it remained consistently high on both occasions. This could be because learners found it difficult to cope with an accent that they were not familiar with even though it is the native-speaker norm that most literature recommends that learners should have as their model. This reflects the importance that should be accorded to learners' reactions because it is ultimately for the learner that language teaching materials are produced.

Since the respondents' theoretically regard the educated British native-speaker model as highly suitable, this ties in with the recommendations, in Chapter One, Section I.6.v, of the link between the pedagogical goal and model. As these findings show, the pedagogical goal can be the educated non-native speaker, while the pedagogical model can be the British educated native-speaker, who is

theoretically highly acceptable to the respondents. The latter can function as the supra-national model-providing the norms whereby the local variety has a set of checks and balances to help it maintain its international intelligibility as discussed in Chapter One.

In relation to the issue of pedagogical models, it is pertinent to refer to a research that was recently conducted on 'The Intelligibility of Malaysian English' (Wang: 1987). One of the specific issues researched into was the Malaysian university students' general opinion about a 'model' of English.

The respondents had to react to the following question:

"If you were given a chance to follow a spoken English course, which variety of English would you prefer?

- a. Malaysian English
- b. American English
- c. Standard British English
- d. Canadian English
- e. Australian English

f. Others (Wang: 1987, Appendix H, p.470)

The findings showed,

"..... that standard British English (or RP) was

still considered the most desirable model though there was an indication that ME was a suitable model: of the 57 subjects, 26 (or 45.6%) of them would like to follow a spoken English course with Standard British English (or RP) as the model whereas only 17 (or 29.8%) and 14 (or 27.6%) would like to follow a course with ME and American English as models respectively." (Wang: 1987, p.33)

*N.B. ME refers to Malaysian English

As a result, Wang recommends the native-speaker model as the model be adhered to in the production of spoken texts and teaching aids such as tapes in the language laboratory for language learning in Malaysia.

The criticism that could be made against Wang's findings is that "Malaysian English" was not distinguished into its three-tiered continuum. Most learners know and largely use MEII which is classified as the mesolect variety, described by Baskaran in Chapter One as having "phonology with more variation including prosodic features especially stress and intonation, syntax where some deviation is acceptable although it is not as stigmatized as broken English and with lexicalisations quite prevalent even for words having international English substitutes."

(Baskaran: 1987) When Malaysian English is referred to generally, without any specifications, most Malaysians associate it with the variety that the majority of the Malaysians speak for intranational communication, that is, MEII.

It must be remembered that there still exists and will for some time yet, as long as there is a need for an international language, a speech community, albeit a limited one, that speaks the acrolect variety of Malaysian English, that is, the variety that does not distinguish in syntax form from Standard British English but varies instead in certain lexical formulations and in the phonology.

Therefore, in any formulation of a question on the acceptability / preferability of models in the Malaysian situation, it is not realistic to exclude the three main varieties of Malaysian English - acrolect, the mesolect and the basilect and to subsume them into one - referred to in Wang's research as "Malaysian English". If it has to be the latter approach adopted, then it should be made explicitly clear that it is the mesolect that is the subvariety referred to as Malaysian English. Therefore, to claim that learners prefer the Standard British English may be a fair statement but cannot be regarded as accurate

considering that 'Malaysian English' was not explicitly classified into its different sub-varieties.

VIII.9 Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, a number of pertinent socioculturally-based decisions can be made stemming from responses of both learners' and teachers' to the questionnaires. In brief, two of the important socioculturally based findings will be summarised in this conclusion. The first is that the principle of balance prevails in the selection of sociocultural contexts - an inclusion of a variety of sociocultural contexts - British, Asian and Malaysian - and not one to the exclusion of all else. The second important finding is the selection of the educated Malaysian with a 'neutral' accent as the pedagogical model of speech, while retaining the British educated speaker as the pedagogical goal to provide a system of checks and balances for the development of the language in the Malaysian environment. These two findings will have valuable implications for the recommendations that need to be made for the production of socioculturally appropriate video materials for learners of EIL.

Thus, having in this chapter discussed the results

obtained from the questionnaires on the various sociocultural issues and in Chapter Six conducted a critical analysis of existing ELT video materials, it is in the next chapter that the implications of the various strands of the results will be drawn together in the form of recommendations for potential video material for use in an EIL context.

Chapter Nine: Implications, Recommendations and Conclusion

IX.1 Introduction

This final chapter will function in both a retrospective manner as well as a prospective one. It will remind us of the aims and scope of the research and will draw on the information obtained in the previous chapters to assess the appropriateness of existing video materials as well as to formulate recommendations for the production of future ELT video material. Given the relative newness of the area, suggestions for future research will form an important component of this chapter, leading onto a final conclusion.

IX.2 Aims of Research

This research set out to investigate the appropriateness of ELT video materials for language learners in the ASEAN countries in general, with a specific focus on the Malaysian language learner at tertiary level. The main research question focused on was the appropriateness of the sociocultural content and design features of the video materials for the learners of EIL.

IX.3 Scope and Coverage of Research

Video material design, or the design of any language teaching material, needs to consider the social, political, educational and cultural environment of the learners in using EIL. If it does not, then there is bound to be a mismatch between the sociocultural and educational input in the materials and the requirements of the learners.

Thus, given the sociocultural emphasis of the research, this naturally necessitated an investigation into the sociolinguistic profile of the role of English in the ASEAN countries, with a focus on Malaysia. A case was delineated for the international currency of English and its role as an essential means of communication in the ASEAN region. With the focus on Malaysia, and the fact that Bahasa Malaysia is now the national language and the language used as the medium of instruction and for all official purposes, it was necessary to clarify the role of English in the country. It was found that English still functions as a valuable means of communication in the private sector and in the higher ranks of the government service. It also functions as a means of inter-ethnic communication, especially between the Indians and the Chinese. On top of its many local roles, it still

maintains its' stronghold as the language of international currency, enabling it to be the means of communication between peoples who come from different sociocultural backgrounds who speak different languages.

Having argued a case for the essential necessity of learning English as an International language, the next issue addressed was the pedagogical applications of English as a means of cross-cultural communication. Communicating in EIL contexts expanded the language components involved in communicative competence to one of cross-cultural communicative competence. This meant not only knowing the basics of English and its appropriate and communicative application, (which is dependent on the role-relationships of the interactors and the nature of the situation - whether formal or informal), but also building up an awareness of the differences that exist between speech behaviours of interactors who come from varying sociocultural backgrounds. These behaviours are exemplified not only in language forms but also in the non-verbal signalling of meaning, ways of managing interaction, turn-taking, topic development and so on. It is these culture-specific aspects that can lead to serious problems in cross-cultural communication.

This culture-specific domain constitutes the cultural and

personal make-up of the learners and has been acquired through the process of learning the first language. It is this which learners cannot be expected to alter to the modes of behaviour of the dominant group which they may have occasion to interact with. Given the diversity and range of potential interactors in the EIL context, this leads onto the basic principle of EIL, which is training learners to acquire qualities to enable them to cope with this diversity of speech behaviours of the various interactors. Apart from the initial awareness, this will incorporate building up qualities of tolerance, understanding and patience, amongst others, to gradually lead to acquiring a culture-general mode of behaviour.

The build-up of these qualities essential for EIL cross-cultural communication, can ideally be served by the medium of video, with its advantageous presentational characteristics of the digital, analogic and iconic symbolic modes. The aspects of cross-cultural communication that can best be facilitated by the medium are those that involve not only the use of the verbal language but also the non-verbal channels, especially the non-vocal channels of proxemics, gestures, facial expressions etc. The dynamic iconic characteristic of the medium makes it ideal for presenting these aspects of language communication that are very difficult to present

through the digital (text) or the analogic (audio-cassettes) symbolic codes. Thus, this enables it to present not only the sociolinguistic components that influence language use but in addition, to present instances of miscommunication.

It is through the analysis of instances of miscommunication, that stem from these differences in social modes of behaviour, that learners' consciousness can be raised. This will facilitate the development of the above mentioned culture-general mode of behaviour, made up of qualities like flexibility and tolerance.

This function of video enables the materials to have an independent educational value - enriching learners' personal development, as well as, teaching the language, thus, enabling both the pedagogic and educational criteria to coincide.

It must always be remembered that despite its many advantages, video can only be as good as the quality of the video materials that are used with it. This led to the main research question, which is to investigate the appropriateness of the sociocultural content and the design features of the materials for language learners in Southeast Asia, with a focus on Malaysia. This was investigated via questionnaires, in Chapters Six, Seven

and Eight and a critical analysis of the video materials, in Chapter Five, based on the evaluative criteria formulated in Chapter Four.

The main variables of the research focused on the sociocultural and design criteria which contribute to the assessment of the appropriateness of existing ELT video materials. Stemming from this, recommendations can be made for the future production of video materials for language learners of EIL.

In this conclusive discussion, the appropriateness issue and the recommendations to be made of ELT video materials, will be dealt with together, as they really form both sides of the same coin. In research terms though, they should be investigated sequentially as the results of the investigation into the appropriateness of the materials form the basis of the recommendations for the production of potential ELT video material. This is the approach which has been adopted in this research, with the appropriateness of the sociocultural and design issues dealt with in Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight and the recommendations made in the final chapter, Chapter Nine.

IX.4 Recommendations for the Future Production of Video Materials

The recommendations have generated from the theoretical issues pertinent to material design in Chapters One to Four, the critical analysis conducted in Chapter Five, the attitudes and reactions of learners to the various sociocultural issues in Chapters Six to Eight. All of this has been embedded in the context of cross-cultural communication via English as an International language.

The following table weaves the strands of information into both general and specific criteria and their recommendations made in an EIL context. The general and specific criteria are directly derived from the checklist of evaluative criteria worked on in Chapter Four, which functioned as the base for the conduct of the critical analysis of the ELT video materials. The recommendations will be made in relation to the specific criteria listed in the table, which have stemmed from the general criteria.

IX.4.i Sociocultural Content of Video Materials

IX.4.i.a Sociocultural Contexts

From the information provided in the questionnaires, learners explicitly stated that they were not in favour of video materials which were set only in British or only in Malaysian sociocultural contexts. They thus valued the need to learn English in different sociocultural contexts, given their awareness and support of the need to acquire English as an International language.

In the percentage allocation of the sociocultural settings for a potential ELT video package, the majority of learners allotted a greater percentage (36 - 65%) to the Malaysian sociocultural settings, but not to the exclusion of British or Asian sociocultural settings. The latter two were allotted approximately 30 - 35% each of the allocation. Thus the principle of balance prevailed in their attitudes towards the sociocultural settings of potential video materials.

The implication for this at the elementary level, is allotting a greater proportion of Malaysian contexts with the gradual introduction of other sociocultural contexts. This is based on the principle of beginning with the

familiar and extending to the unfamiliar.

The advanced learners, on the other hand, could have a more equitable balance of interactions incorporating Malaysian, Asian and British speakers, portraying interactions which function as role models of behaviour as well as instances of miscommunication as will be discussed below.

Given the results above, it is clear that 'Video English' (Macmillan and British Council), which was critically analysed in Chapter Five, does not meet the sociocultural needs of learners of English as an International language. This is because it comprises solely British sociocultural contexts, to the exclusion of all else. As a result of the specific sociocultural context, naturally the interactors would also comprise only British native-speakers and a monomodel sociocultural behaviour typical of that society. Due to the focus on only a particular sociocultural mode of behaviour, the monomodel ELT video materials do not seem to recognise the fact that interactions in the EIL contexts involve both verbal and non-verbal manifestations which are dependent on the sociocultural background of the interactors. These lead to differing styles of interactions and may potentially pose problems in cross-cultural communication.

The BBC productions - 'The Sadrina Project' and 'Bid for Power' -do extend their horizons and incorporate settings and interactors of differing sociocultural settings. This is a step in the right direction but they have the potential to extend further. It is not sufficient to portray sociocultural settings of different countries with, as they state, an international mode of behaviour. This international mode of behaviour was questioned in Chapter Five, Section V.4.iii. As argued in Chapter Five, what is additionally important is to ensure that the modes of behaviour incorporated in these materials do reflect the variances as well as similarities that exist in cross-cultural interactions. This cannot be done by adopting a monomodel approach to the sociocultural context nor to the sociocultural behaviour portrayed, despite claims of their international nature.

IX.4.i.b Nature of Interaction

The next criteria is that of the nature of the interaction. This is important because it is this that determines the focus of the pedagogical emphasis in the video material. This, as discussed in Chapter Three, should be dual-focused due to the dual-nature of cross-cultural communicative competence. They could function either as role models of behaviour or portray instances of

miscommunication.

Most existing ELT video material, as seen in the critical analysis, function as role models of behaviour-presentation of an interaction with a focus on the contextualised language use, with no inherent communicative problems. This is useful for beginners as it contextualises the communicative use of language and is able to depict the different role-relationships and situations which influence the verbal and non-verbal language used. Learners who are beginners need all the help they can get and therefore it is recommended that more of the materials at the elementary level be based on this.

At the intermediate and advanced levels, the materials could be extended to include a greater proportion of instances of miscommunication. It is through the analysis of these instances of miscommunication which stem from either pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic failure that a learner could develop an awareness of the variance that exists in modes of behaviour in cross-cultural communication. This could be similar to the work developed for "Crosstalk". (See Chapter Two, Section II.8)

IX.4.ii Pedagogical model of speech

Given that Malaysia is a multi-ethnic population, with people who possess varying attitudes to the English language, and is a country which has had a colonial history with Britain, the issue of the pedagogical model of speech had to be addressed, to determine which speakers learners would regard as suitable characters in the video materials.

The speaker that the majority were in favour of as the pedagogical model of speech was the educated non-native speaker who speaks with a neutral accent, which is neither strongly British nor otherwise ethnically marked. He/She could either be a Malay, Chinese or Indian who possesses the above speech features. It was suggested in the discussion of results (Chapter Eight, Section VIII.7) that this speaker could be the pedagogical goal for the teaching and learning of EIL in the Malaysian context.

In existing ELT video materials, most of the characters are educated British speakers with standard accents. It was thus important to find out respondents' attitudes to this particular type of speaker. The majority of the learners responded positively to the theoretical question, made up of a written description of the educated British

speaker. On the other hand, after listening to the taped sample of the speaker, the majority of the learners' did not regard him as a suitable pedagogical model of speech in the Malaysian context. Given this, the suggestion made was that the pedagogical goal could be the educated Malaysian speaker with a 'neutral' accent. The educated British speaker could function as the pedagogical model (goal and model being used as Brumfit so defined them- See Chapter One, Section I.6.iv). The pedagogical model could provide the necessary checks and balances to ensure that the pedagogical goal remains a variety that is internationally intelligible. Without ensuring at the very least linguistic intelligibility, the very function of the language functioning as an international means of communication remains endangered.

IX.4.111 Design Features of the Video Materials

The next phase of recommendations deal with the design features of the video materials. A consistent theme underlying the study of the appropriateness of video materials has been the necessity of focusing on the learner and enhancing his learning abilities. This can be done through ensuring:

- i. the resourcefulness and flexibility in the design

- format,
- ii. pedagogically effective length of video text,
- iii. incorporation of pedagogical devices,
- iv. a balance between educational and interest principles in the design of video materials.

IX.4.iii.a Design Format

The design format of 'Video English' is highly effective from a pedagogical viewpoint because it is made up of short snippets of interactions in independent sequences. This gives it the flexibility to function as resource material. This ability is a plus factor because it enables it to be cost-effective, given that with this flexibility, it would be possible to use it with a variety of communicative courses, whatever the language approach adopted by these courses.

In contrast, the design format of the BBC productions was found to be inflexible because of the continuous story-line which linked one sequence to another, and thus required materials to be used sequentially. This would not provide it with the flexibility to be used by a particular course as resource. In fact, because of their rigid design format, these materials would have to be used as courses in themselves in a fixed sequence, the way a serial story

is viewed over television.

IX.4.iii.b Length of Video Text

The length of the video text is influenced by the design format adopted. In Chapter Four, in the discussion on the evaluative criteria, it is clear that the preference is for video sequences which are short, especially for the elementary learners, as these facilitate capturing the learners' attention. This feature together with the incorporation of pedagogical devices (which will be discussed below) contribute to active viewing which in turn contributes to learnability.

For the intermediate and advanced learners, given the need to incorporate in ELT video material, instances of miscommunication, it might be necessary to have longer sequences of about ten minutes. With the incorporation of pedagogical devices and clear stopping points, the teacher could utilise these materials in a pedagogically effective manner.

'Video English' operates on the above principle in relation to the length of its sequences - short snippets for elementary learners to longer ones lasting five to ten minutes for more advanced learners. In contrast, the BBC

productions, based on the lines of drama television, have sequences which run for about twenty minutes. The length of the viewing time, with the presence of elements of drama, suspense and a strong story-line, definitely provide for very entertaining video materials for language teaching. As has been discussed at length in Chapter Five, it is pedagogically ineffective to focus on entertainment at the expense of learnability.

IX.4.iii.c Pedagogical devices to be incorporated

The reasons for incorporating these were mainly to promote active viewing, which it is argued is essential to promote learnability, as discussed in Chapter Four, Section IV.5.iv. These could take the form of graphics to emphasise particular language points, or to focus learners' attention on a particular instance of communication. They could also incorporate clear stopping points in the sequences, to facilitate ease of stopping at a particular point for purposes of analysing and discussing the pertinent aspect of communication.

The above pedagogical devices would be especially useful in video texts which for some pedagogical reason have to be ten to twenty minutes in viewing time. This brings to mind especially the BBC productions, which given their

length, should incorporate pedagogical devices, to point out certain language points or non-verbal behaviour. This would provide the necessary stops which should actively involve the learner in some minor or major task. Unfortunately, this is not to be so. In Chapter Four, Section IV.5.ii, it was argued that this was because most video producers focus on entertainment at the expense of pedagogy.

This then leads onto the next section which deals with the balance that needs to be maintained between educational and interest principles for materials to be pedagogically effective.

IX.4.iii.d Balance between Educational and Interest Principles

An important underlying principle in the production of video materials should be the maintenance of a balance between learnability and entertainment. A balance needs to be maintained between quality of interest and creativity inherent in the materials and the educational purpose because materials without the spark of creativity and originality will only bore learners and detract from pedagogical effectiveness. At the same time, materials that focus on the elements of interest and do not

continually bear in mind that they are being produced to teach and enable learning to take place, also suffer from the disease of imbalanced priorities. This can only lead to pedagogically ineffective materials.

Therefore, bearing in mind the above recommendations and aspiring to create materials which are both interesting as well as aspire to educate, should, provide the necessary checks and balances which will result in greater possibilities of producing appropriate video materials for EIL learners in Malaysia and Southeast Asia.

Having dealt with the specific recommendations for the production of potential sociocultural and design appropriate video materials for language learners of EIL, it would be pertinent to discuss the reality and practicality of implementing the above recommendations.

IX.5 Issue of the Production of Potential ELT Video Materials

IX.5.1 Western - dominated Productions

The production of ELT video materials has so far been the dominant activity of organisations like the BBC, the British Council and large publishing firms. Through

collaborative efforts, these organisations possess the resources to produce expensive productions of language teaching video materials, of the sort that were discussed in Chapter Five - e.g. 'Video English' (Macmillan and the British Council) and 'The Sadrina Project' (BBC).

The demands of present video production - good scripts, dramatic elements, professional actors and actresses - entail costly productions. Given the varying needs of the market and the necessity of recouping economic costs, producers often consider markets on a global basis, and choose to adopt the traditional ELT approach of setting them in native-speaker sociocultural contexts.

Unfortunately, as the previous chapters have shown, there have been minimal attempts to accommodate the sociocultural and educational requirements of language learners of EIL. The results from the questionnaires clearly express the learners' dissatisfaction with materials set mainly in the mono-model sociocultural context. Instead, the learners express a realisation and need for materials which reflect the use of English in the ASEAN region - a means of communication between peoples of varying sociocultural backgrounds.

One of the main reasons for the video material producers

not accomodating to the growing change in the role and function of English, is offered by Preswell, who says,

"The BBC is not in the position to produce tailor-made series for each country. The best it can do (and it is a good best) is to take full advantage of its agents abroad to adapt material targeted internationally to the needs of their particular country.

It must also be recognized that a 'Far Eastern' version is presently not feasible, even if it could be decided what the 'Far East' is anywhere. The market there might be growing exponentially: but at present, with its generally lower standard of living, and the ubiquity of pirating, it does not rank yet as the world's most profitable market. The BBC cannot afford to forget that most of its money still comes from Europe." (Presswell: 1987, p.37)

In contradiction to the above recommendation, this research has shown that adaptation of existing ELT material, (which is heavily native-speaker based), to suit each country would not suffice, given the results of the data which depict, for example, that the majority of the respondents are in favour of a more balanced distribution of sociocultural settings: not only British, but also

Malaysian and Asian sociocultural settings, given the role of English as an International Language.

IX.5.11 Need for Local Productions

What this seems to suggest in real-terms is that it may be up to the particular regions themselves to produce video materials which would be more suitable and acceptable for their English language learners. If this is the case, then the following recommendations to be made in this research will be useful for producers of potential ELT video materials.

Sceptics might regard this as an impractical suggestion given that ELT video materials production as they are presently designed, require high financial input. But if less ambitious projects were planned, then various countries might very well be encouraged to embark on their own productions. As has been discussed at length in Chapter Four, it is the relevant, educational feature that learners would be concentrating on and not the lack of sophistication in the quality of the productions. This is supported by McGovern who says,

"Learners are usually not so demanding as the producers. If the learners see that the subject

matter is relevant they are usually prepared to accept considerably less than a high professional standard of production." (McGovern: 1980, p.128)

IX.5.11.a Necessity of Local Participation in Production of Appropriate Video Materials for EIL learners

The above discussion develops two crucial issues. The first is in relation to the appropriate production of video materials for EIL learners. Since, as mentioned intermittently throughout the thesis, it is important to consider the sociocultural and pedagogic language needs of the context in which English is applied, it is natural following on from this that local participation, familiar with the cultural, political and educational context, be involved in the productions. If this is not initiated, and producers in Britain remain in their ivory towers, making prescriptive decisions regarding materials production, then the materials, even if adopted will not be effective because the crucial issues of relevant sociocultural and pedagogical applications would not have been applied appropriately.

English functioning as an International language, has important ramifications not only for materials production

but also the field of applied linguistics in general. There has to be an acceptance of the fact that English as an International language is the means of communication of people in different parts of the world. Thus, just as video material has to consider the sociocultural and educational principles in the use of the language in different regions, the field of applied linguistics too needs to adopt a similar consideration. This should result in the flow of information being two-ways and not one, as it traditionally has been. With this consideration, a mutually beneficial relationship can be built and the field of applied linguistics can be the richer for it.

IX.5.ii.b Myth Surrounding Technical Quality of Production

The second issue involves the quality of video materials. This has arisen largely as a result of dissatisfaction with the existing video materials. As discussed in Chapter Five, existing materials focus on the elements of good television at the expense of the pedagogical principles. The established producers of video materials have built up a myth surrounding what is acceptable regarding the quality of materials. The implicit assumption derived from the existing nature of video

materials is that, unless materials were produced with a technical sophistication as close to that of television, learners will not be satisfied with the materials because learners are used to television and thus expect the language teaching video materials to be similar.

In the educational context, the question of quality should not concentrate excessively on the technical quality but consider instead, the relevance of expectations and needs of language learners and a reliability from the pedagogic point of view. These ELT materials should be pedagogically effective with a premium placed on the learners' needs. Quality disassociated from pedagogic principles is not much use to the language learner.

We are not recommending here a complete disregard of the technical quality. A consideration has to be given to maintaining clear verbal and pictorial quality. If this is not ensured, then the learning process will be hampered. But it is recommended that the focus should not be on the technical quality of productions but on the pedagogical principles the medium is meant to serve.

Having established the necessity for video materials to consider sociocultural, educational and design factors in terms of the learners of particular regions, the recommendations that stem from the results of this

research would be relevant for potential producers of ELT video material, especially for learners who need to communicate with persons from varying sociocultural backgrounds.

This is research which has used theoretical knowledge from the field of applied linguistics and attempted to relate it to a practical instance of the appropriateness of video material for language learners in an EIL context. Delving deep into the ramifications of the theoretical applications, has resulted not only in recommendations for the production of future video materials, but also suggestions for future research, the conduct of which will have valuable implications for this research area as a whole.

IX.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Researching into the appropriateness of ELT video materials for language learners who need to learn English to communicate in international settings has resulted in the applications of a number of relatively new areas in the field of applied linguistics. These are the role of English as an International language and the implications for teaching spoken cross-cultural communicative skills and the role of video in developing cross-cultural

communicative skills.

Given the newness of these areas, this small attempt of researching into this area has uncovered a number of complex issues that need researching into in the future. These are issues which will have implications for the design of appropriate video materials for language learners of EIL in Malaysia and the ASEAN region.

IX.6.i Socio-pragmatic Research

One of the issues is in the area of socio-pragmatic research. Sociopragmatic failure, as discussed in Chapter Two, is one of the causes of miscommunication in cross-cultural interactions. But, given the sensitive nature of sociopragmatic behaviour, it was recommended that learners cannot be taught the appropriate sociopragmatic behaviour of the dominant group but should instead be made aware of the differences in sociocultural behaviour that exist as a result of interactions between persons who come from different sociocultural backgrounds.

Therefore given the relatively recent interest in this area of sociopragmatic interaction, more research needs to be carried out on the nature of occurrence of instances of miscommunication in the Southeast Asian context, between

native and non-native as well as non-native and non-native speakers. This could be valuable input for the design of video materials to facilitate cross-cultural communication.

As is appropriately recommended,

"Perhaps what is now needed is a participant observation study in international settings to see what language problems actually do occur, with what severity and from what apparent causes." (Campbell, Ekniyom, Haque and Smith: 1983, p.47)

The study of these interactions could be based on the following categories of analysis, amongst others:

- i. Ethnic identity
- ii. Perceptions about interactions in general
 - a. Co-membership
 - b. Role, status and power
 - c. Attitudes and emotions
- iii. Perceptions about the particular interaction
 - a. Schemata and frames
 - b. Discourse management

This might be described as over-ambitious but a start has

to be made and through collaborative research in the region, could very well turn out to be a reality in the future.

IX.6.ii Learners' Attitudes to Various Design Features of Video Materials

The questionnaires covered the sociocultural aspects of the research but did not cover the design aspects. This was a deliberate decision because of two reasons. Firstly, it was felt that the design aspects were beyond the knowledge sphere of learners. Secondly, the only video material that the respondents' had been exposed to was 'Video English'. Therefore, given the limited exposure, this was not the ideal situation in which to investigate learners' attitudes to the various design features.

Learners' attitudes to the various design features can only be investigated after a few sequences have been produced based on the recommendations of this research, re: design format, length of text, incorporation of pedagogical devices. Then learners could be shown the various interactive sequences of the video materials, which would incorporate different design features as well as different types of interactions, after which discussive

interviews could be carried out to ascertain their preferences for particular features and not others.

This could be part of the formative evaluation that is recommended for the production of video materials. The input from these discussions could then be incorporated into the future sequences of video material to be produced.

IX.6.iii The Acceptable Model of Speech of Asean Speakers

The next suggestion relates to the acceptable model of speech. This, in this particular Malaysian-based research, has been limited to the Malaysian and native-speakers, due to historical associations of the British with Malaysia and the necessity of investigating the Malaysian pedagogical model, given Malaysia's multi-ethnic population.

But, as the results clearly depict, learners value the incorporation of Asian sociocultural settings in the production of potential video materials, given their awareness of the role of English as a means of communication among the peoples in the Asean countries.

Therefore, it will be essential to investigate what the

learners would find acceptable in terms of speech accents, incorporating Thai and Filipino speakers to mention a few. This is to support the basic principles of material design which is to develop materials on the basis of learners' acceptability and appropriateness to language learning needs.

IX.7 Conclusion

In concluding, it would be appropriate to repeat the point of balance that is recommended for the design of future video materials for the Asean region or for any other region. The world is getting smaller and smaller and interaction between persons from various parts of the world is turning out to be the norm rather than the exception. This includes of course native as well as non-native speakers. Therefore, for the principle of moderation and balance to be implemented in material design, video material should incorporate sociocultural settings and speakers from various regions and not just be limited to the native speaker. The flow of traffic and the resultant human communication via English, is not just one-way but is multi-directional and video producers would be wise to be cognizant of this fact.

I would like to finally end with a few words from a book

that I read a long time ago but have unfortunately forgotten the source of. But the message has stuck in my mind and seems appropriate to recall at this moment. It specifically focused on evaluation of programs but can safely be extended to an evaluation of any research, or even of life itself. It says,

"Evaluation is for making it work.

If it works ...

Notice and nurture

If it doesn't work ...

Notice and change."

Appendix

Questionnaire A

Dear Respondent,

My name is Saran Kaur Gill and I am working for a research degree at the University of London. I need your help in answering this questionnaire which I hope you will complete as frankly and honestly as possible.

The title of my research project is, "The Appropriateness of the Sociocultural Features of 'Video English' for Language Learners at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia."

The term, 'Sociocultural factors' refers to all the factors that are involved when two people communicate verbally with each other. When people communicate with one another, they do so in a place, at particular time, with a particular purpose. This interaction occurs in a particular society with its own culture or way of life. Thus, when persons interact, there are sociocultural factors which act on the interaction and which then influence the speaker into using the appropriate language form and to behave appropriately according to the situation he/she is in.

Video material is able to portray these interactions taking place in a particular societal context. Therefore video materials are made up of:

- the verbal language
- the characters
- the setting
- the gestures and facial expressions
- the attitudes of the speakers
- the social behaviour

All these factors are influenced by the culture/way of life of the particular community in which the interaction takes place. Different societies have sociocultural behaviour which may be similar in certain aspects and different in others.

For this questionnaire, I would like to know your attitudes and reactions towards learning English from video materials set in:

- i. British sociocultural contexts
- ii. Malaysian sociocultural contexts
- iii. Multi-sociocultural contexts

Please answer the questionnaire as frankly as possible as I need all the information I can get. This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. I merely want to know what your opinions are on the various issues. All information will be strictly confidential.

Thank you very much for your help in this research.

1. Do you think video materials for teaching English should be set in British sociocultural contexts?

Please circle one appropriate number in response to the statements provided. Please use the following code:

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = uncertain
4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

- a. video materials set in British sociocultural contexts are useful for learners if they plan to go to England for further studies. 1 2 3 4 5
- b. learners are interested in the culture of the British people and want to know more about the people who speak English. 1 2 3 4 5
- c. English is a prestige language and it is beneficial to know more about the way of life of the British people who speak it. 1 2 3 4 5
- d. material set in British sociocultural contexts is necessary for the successful learning of English. 1 2 3 4 5
- e. those who study English as the language used in British culture will think and behave like British people. 1 2 3 4 5

f. it would not benefit learners to be limited 1 2 3 4 5
to materials set only in British
sociocultural settings, since a lot of
Malaysia's trade and diplomatic relations
is with many different countries in the
world, and thus Malaysians need to interact
with both non-native as well as native
speakers.

2. Do you think video materials for teaching English
should be set in Malaysian multi-racial sociocultural
contexts?

Please circle one appropriate number in response to the
statements provided. Please use the following code:

1 = strongly disagree	2 = disagree	3 = uncertain
4 = agree	5 = strongly agree	

a. English is still used as a social 1 2 3 4 5
means of communication among Malaysians.
Thus it is beneficial to learn it set in
Malaysian sociocultural contexts.

- b. English is the main language of 1 2 3 4 5
communication in the Malaysian private
sector. Thus it is beneficial to learn it
set in Malaysian sociocultural contexts.
- c. Learners would understand each other better 1 2 3 4 5
if they learnt English set in the
sociocultural contexts of Malaysian ethnic
groups interacting with each other.
- d. it is not essential to set video 1 2 3 4 5
materials in Malaysian multi-racial
contexts because English is learnt best as
it is used in the sociocultural settings of
British speakers.
- e. English is not needed as a means of 1 2 3 4 5
communication among Malaysians. Thus it
is not necessary to learn it set in
Malaysian sociocultural contexts.

3. What are your opinions about English teaching video materials set in multi-sociocultural settings? (e.g. some sequences in Asian, some in Malaysian and some in British sociocultural contexts.)

Please circle one appropriate number in response to the statements provided. Please use the following code ranging from:

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = uncertain
4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

a. English should be learnt as it is used 1 2 3 4 5
by the British people set only in
British sociocultural contexts.

b. learning to interact with speakers from 1 2 3 4 5
different sociocultural backgrounds will
help make learners more tolerant and open-
minded.

c. learners will be better equipped to 1 2 3 4 5
communicate in international situations
if they learn English set in a variety of
situations - Asian, Malaysian and British
sociocultural contexts.

d. seeing English being used by 1 2 3 4 5
speakers from different socio-cultural
backgrounds may be confusing and
ineffective for learners.

4. Which of the following settings of video material would you regard as appropriate for students on the 'Communication Skills' course at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia?

Please circle the appropriate column using the following code:

1 = least appropriate 2 = less appropriate 3 = uncertain
4 = appropriate 5 = most appropriate

Settings of video material depicting:

- a. only British speakers in totally British settings 1 2 3 4 5
- b. only Malaysian speakers in totally Malaysian settings 1 2 3 4 5
- c. Malaysian, Asian and British speakers in a variety of settings. 1 2 3 4 5

5. In English Language teaching (ELT) video material, which of the following speakers would you regard as suitable teaching models?

Please circle the appropriate number, using the following code ranging from:

1 = least suitable 2 = less suitable 3 = uncertain
4 = suitable 5 = highly suitable

As a general rule, Malay speakers speak Malay differently depending on which part of Malaysia they come from. In the same way, British speakers speak English differently depending on which part of Britain they come from.

Thus, would you regard as suitable models for ELT video materials,...

a. an educated British English speaker with a 1 2 3 4 5 strong local accent.

b. an educated British English speaker with a 1 2 3 4 5 standard accent.

In Malaysia, many educated persons speak English well with different accents. Thus, would you regard as suitable models, for ELT video materials...

c. an educated Malaysian who speaks English 1 2 3 4 5 with a Malay accent and makes almost no grammatical mistakes

- d. an educated Malaysian who speaks English 1 2 3 4 5
with a Chinese accent and makes almost no
grammatical mistakes
- e. an educated Malaysian who speaks English 1 2 3 4 5
with an Indian accent and makes almost
no grammatical mistakes
- f. an educated Malaysian who speaks English 1 2 3 4 5
with a 'neutral' accent that is an
accent which is neither strongly Malaysian
nor strongly British and one who makes
almost no grammatical mistakes

6. We would like to know what you regard the role of
English to be for Malaysians.

Please circle the appropriate number using the following
code ranging from:

1 = strongly disagree	2 = disagree	3 = uncertain
4 = agree	5 = strongly agree	

- a. the language to be used as a means of 1 2 3 4 5
communication between non-native speakers
who do not share a common language, e.g.
between a Malaysian and a Japanese.

b. the language to be used as a means of 1 2 3 4 5
communication among Malaysians, e.g.
between the Malays and the Chinese.

c. the language to be used as a means of 1 2 3 4 5
communication between native and non-native
speakers of English, e.g. between a
Malaysian and a British person.

7. Imagine you have a chance to plan the sociocultural
settings of a video package for language learners of
the 'Communication Skills' course at UKM; out of a
total of a 100%, what would you allot to the
following:

a. British sociocultural settings	_____	%
b. Malaysian sociocultural settings	_____	%
c. Asian sociocultural settings	_____	%

8. What are your opinions about English as a language?
Please circle the appropriate column, using the
following code ranging from:

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = uncertain
4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

- a. it is a language that is the exclusive 1 2 3 4 5
property of native speakers of the language
- British, Americans, Australians.
- b. it is an international language - used as 1 2 3 4 5
a means of communication between persons
from different countries who do not have a
common language

9. Which of the people in the following list, do you
think learners might interact with in English, in
work situations, when they leave University.

Please circle the appropriate number, to reflect your
opinions, using the following code:

1 = No 2 = Maybe 3 = Yes

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| a. a native speaker from England | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| b. a Thai | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| c. a Japanese | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| d. an American | 1 | 2 | 3 |

e. an Australian	1	2	3
f. a Malaysian	1	2	3
g. an Indonesian	1	2	3
h. an Indian national	1	2	3
i. a Singaporean	1	2	3
j. a Pakistani	1	2	3

10. Which of the people in the following list, do you think learners might interact with in English, in social situations, when they leave University.

Please circle the appropriate number, to reflect your opinions, using the following code:

1 = No 2 = Maybe 3 = Yes

a. a native speaker from England	1	2	3
b. a Thai	1	2	3
c. a Japanese	1	2	3
d. an American	1	2	3
e. an Australian	1	2	3
f. a Malaysian	1	2	3
g. an Indonesian	1	2	3
h. an Indian national	1	2	3
i. a Singaporean	1	2	3
j. a Pakistani	1	2	3

TIGERS

Tigers are found in India and most of the countries of South-East Asia. They live in forests and grassy plains, where there are plenty of other animals for them to hunt for food. If you see a tiger in a zoo, you may think its coat is brightly coloured and easily seen, but in the jungles and grassland where it lives, a tiger is hard to see. The sunlight shining through leaves and branches makes patches of bright light and shadow. A tiger's golden coloured coat, with its dark stripes, mixes so well into these patches of sunlight and shadow that it is not easily seen. When it walks through the long forest grass, it is also hard to see, for its hair is the same colour as the blades of yellowish grass and patches of deep shadow.

(Kailasapathy:1975)

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